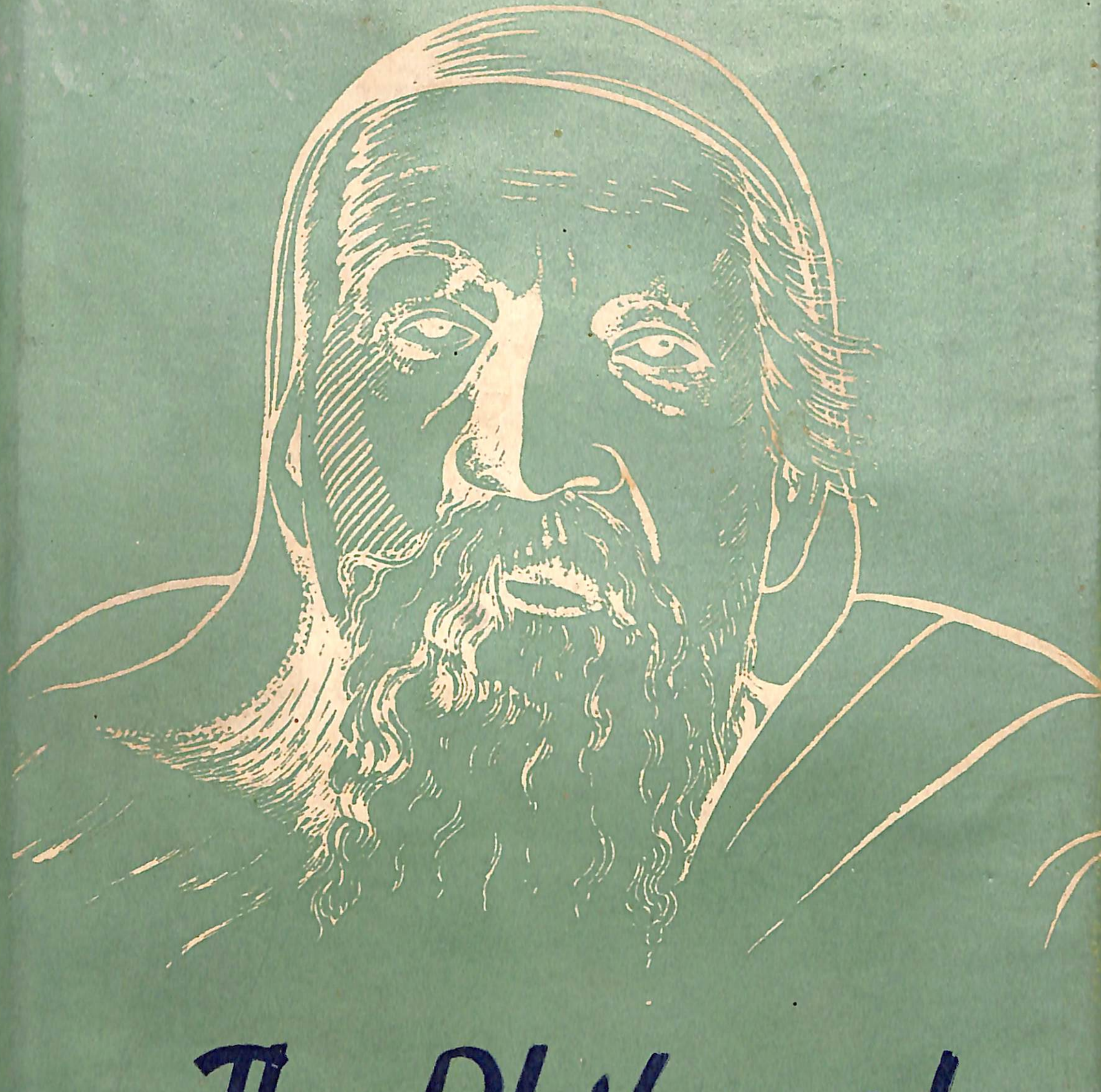


The Philosophy of SRI AUROBINDO

Ram Nath Sharma

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THE
PHILOSOPHY OF SRI AUROBINDO

[A thesis approved for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Allahabad, India]

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To

The Mother

FOREWORD

Philosophy has now become too much identified with a point of view, an approach, an 'ism'. It has become the application or elaboration of an angle of view to life and existence. This is intimately connected with the intellectualist bias of our age and culture. Intellect abstracts and then universalises and thereby seeks to understand. This is one type of philosophical activity. It certainly lights up particular issues, discovers new insights, shows new pathways of truth and knowledge. But it lacks a wholeness of the philosophical truth. Its approach is, what one might call 'particularist' and its product of thought is a competitive view.

A philosophy that would accept all and seek to explain all and reject exclusiveness of all kinds, will have to take its stand on a basis of experience, larger and wider than an intellectualist abstraction. It will then wield the data of life and existence from a more comprehensive standpoint and, therefore, that will mean a richer line of growth. It will then have a prospect of satisfying man and his curiosity more comprehensively. Intellect will in that role be less insistent on its own terms and more appreciative of the varied facts of life, less prepossessed and egoistic and more objective and catholic in spirit.

Such a line of philosophical activity is not all too difficult to conceive even in our present-day orientation. But it is certainly a thing of the future. There are indications enough, which point towards such a development. The idea of wholeness is a wonderful new emphasis. And it has pervasively invaded many fields of knowledge, psychology, philosophy and even natural science. Perhaps a too full experience of abstractions and divisions creates in general life too an urge for integration and unity.

Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy is, to my mind, a pioneering attempt in this possible growth of philosophical activity. It embodies the spirit of wholeness or integralism in its inspiring percep-

tion, in its method and in its resultant body of thought. It has a sort of innate feeling that all experience must be real. Nothing that is experienced, has a place in experience, can be real. All the question is of identifying the quality and degree of reality in an experience and relating it duly to other experiences. In point of method it maintains that the modes of cognition should be adequate to the object to be known. It would easily appear to be a self-evident proposition. But when its philosophical consequences are worked out, it means a revolution in epistemological thinking. Kant had demonstrated through his antinomies that the normal rational process, quite competent to deal with the finite things of the phenomenon, becomes involved in contradictions when it concerns itself with the infinities of the world, soul and God. He was perfectly right in this demonstration, but in the absence of a cognitive process adequate to the Infinite he had no alternative but to give way to agnosticism, so far as the ultimate reality was concerned. Sri Aurobindo under his method, would affirm, at the first instance, the necessity of collaboration between philosophy and yoga the attempt to know reality and the attempt personally to grow in the scale of cognitive processes. In this view the philosopher must himself seek a progressive integration and growth of his personality and thus evolve in himself the higher intuitive process of the integral personality. He will then have an access to the Infinite of existence, which is barred to the discursive reason. The highest in this scale of cognitive processes is the Supermind, which affords to Sri Aurobindo the supreme insight into the mystery of life and existence. It is the sky, with which he confidently ventures a solution of the most intractable of philosophical problems. The Supermind is the greatest idea of his epistemology and a full philosophical interpretation and incorporation of it is a prospect and a promise for philosophy.

In point of the product of thought Sri Aurobindo's philosophy is a field of understanding and awareness, truly global and panoramic. In it, one discovers, as it were, different philosophies, different views, different 'isms' duly accommodated in their respective places of honour. There is an attitude of acceptance and truthful appraisal of each. It is a standpoint and a philosophy really monistic,

all-inclusive, comprehensive. The truth too, then, instead of being rather linear, becomes global and multi-dimensional.

Such a philosophy will naturally have its own special difficulties too. And the chief among these is that of pressing the language of the analytical mind the service of a synthetic handling of experience. Evidently where the purpose is a grasp of things in their totalities and ultimately the last totality, the language will have to function differently. Ordinarily it is adapted to the task of discrimination and organisation of finite objects and the adjustment of their parts. In the modern period, philosophy has largely followed the standards of natural science in thinking as well as language. And the result has been the loss of the sense of unity of existence and thus disintegration of life and knowledge. If our new urge for "the whole" has to become real and lead us steadily to "the true whole, the whole of wholes", then our thinking as well as the language will naturally have to receive a new turn.

In the understanding of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy, this is exactly a basic difficulty. Sri Aurobindo's philosophy demands of the reader the appropriate turn of mind for the appreciation of synthetic handling of experience and its proper thinking as well as language. And one accustomed to the analytical way does not find the readjustment easy. It is not true that one must know Indian philosophy and the Sanskrit terms in order to understand Sri Aurobindo. The real question is of being able to take an approach comprehensive, synthetic, experiential and patiently inquiring rather than one trenchantly logical, exclusive and egoistically insistent. And where a person is able to recognise the essential character of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy, in point of thought as well as language and adjust himself suitably, then the study of it will become a real experience. He will be delighted to see 'wholes' grow upon 'wholes' and build up ever larger and vaster 'wholes'. The insights into truth and reality that will thus emerge in him will become his lasting satisfaction. He will, of course, find it difficult to assent to many things, but even then he will not find himself thrown out. The philosophy will appear to have full understanding and even appreciation for his doubt and difference.

Dr. R. N. Sharma has, I think, rendered a signal service to the cause of the new thinking—comprehensive, synthetic and intuitive—by making this study of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy, which is a great pioneering attempt in this direction. This study is bound to serve as an easy, interesting and an effective introduction to the reading of Sri Aurobindo himself. Dr. Sharma has been able to go the essential judgments of Sri Aurobindo, recognise their inter-relations in the totality of his thought and then expound them independently in modern simple philosophical language and also relate them to their parallels in the history of philosophy, Eastern and Western. In his chapters entitled "Knowledge and Truth" and "Methods", in particular, he has achieved some *strikingly original formulations* of Sri Aurobindo's thought. His hold over the fact of 'Integral Experience' is clear and firm and he has, therefore, succeeded in formulating Sri Aurobindo's view of truth and the philosophical method, the two most important issues of any philosophy, in an extremely happy manner.

Dr. Sharma seems to have responded to Sri Aurobindo's thought with such deep sympathy that *he tends to reflect the original thinking even unconsciouly.* Some of his short apparently incidental sentences, to be found all over, strike one as the profoundest in philosophical content. Here are a few of the kind. 'The widest and the most comprehensive seeing is the wisest one', 'The philosopher is a lover of knowledge and never a sole possessor of it', 'Knowledge is not a jump from ignorance but a gradual unveiling' and 'The more comprehensive is the more wise'. They give one a thrill as one comes across them. They brighten up the text a great deal, which is otherwise too easy and fluent.

The spirit of the entire writing is happily reminiscent of the original. It is catholic, wide, comprehensive, the one right for a monistic philosophy.

It is a pleasure to offer a Foreword to such a work.

INDRA SEN

Sri Aurobindo Ashram
Pondicherry
April 10, 1958.

PREFACE

The purpose of the present thesis is a critical evaluation of Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy, with special reference to the main problems of metaphysics and religion. Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy includes all the aspects of human life, social, political, moral, religious and spiritual, etc. It is difficult to deal with all of these within a single work. Hence, I had to leave social, political and moral Philosophy, of which I have given only a brief reference. If time permits, I, however, wish to take up this remaining portion for yet another research work.

In the completion of the present work I always got encouragement from my guide and teacher Professor R. N. Kaul, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Allahabad University, whose kind affection and timely suggestions have led me to keep steadily on my path. In the understanding of my subject, I was much inspired by the scholarly expositions of Dr. S. K. Maitra, Ex-Professor and Head of Department of Philosophy, Banaras Hindu University, who has very kindly allowed me time to discuss and get suggestions from him. Besides, there are many others who have been directly or indirectly responsible for the successful completion of the present work in minimum time. The noticeable among them are Dr. S. Datta, Reader, Department of Philosophy, Allahabad University; Dr. Indra Sen and Dr. J Smith of Sri Aurobindo Ashram Pondicherry and Sri N. Basu, Local Secretary, Sri Aurobindo Path Chakra I thank them all for their interest in my work.

RAM NATH SHARMA

August 1, 1957.

An Appreciation

BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY

Banaras 5—13-1-1958.

The Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo by Dr. Ramnath Sharma is a valuable contribution to the literature on the subject. It has brought out very clearly the central feature of Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy, namely, its integralism. The author has shown how integralism is not only the dominant feature of Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy but also of his yoga and psychology. The book therefore gives us not only a general view of Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy but also of his yoga and psychology. It gives us also something more— a peep into the nature of future society. This constitutes, in fact, the unique feature of the book. It ends with a message of the Gnostic Age...... a message which is wonderfully thrilling.

S. K. Maitra.

Ex-Head, Department of Philosophy,
Banaras Hindu University,
Banaras.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Complex Modern civilization, overburdened with technology, is threatening a relapse into barbarism or an extinction of Homo Sapiens. Man is facing today, the problems which are characteristic of the atomic age, and bred by industrialism and materialism. Everywhere, we find chaos and frustration. Solutions have been offered from all sides. Some have been put to test and rejected, others are yet to be tried. Science and international law have proved helpless. Thoughtful are looking towards religion, morality and spirituality. As one an author puts it, "The alternative with which we are faced is: either atrophy of our brain power; degeneration of man, decline of his intellectual and spiritual activities which become more and more mechanicals and in the end slavery in new totalitarian regimes with overcentralised control; or a spiritual revolution; an awakening of man to the fact that he, after all, is a spiritual being, with inexhaustible spiritual powers; and a stern determination to defend his liberty and to subordinate the so-called progress of science and technology to the moral and spiritual end of humanity within a democratic order.[1]"

Sri Aurobindo's is a 'weltanshauung,' which offers a spiritual solution of all the problems of man. To judge its consistency within itself and its value amidst other approaches, is the end sought for in the present work. The enquiry has, however, been limited to the problems of metaphysics and religion. The topics selected for separate Chapters are; General Principles; Knowledge and truth; Methods; Absolute and God; Self and Individuality; World and Creation; The Evolution; Religious Experience and finally, Integral Yoga and Human Evolution. In this plan, each subsequent chapter depends on the previous one for its background. Thus, the general principles *i. e.* the definitions of Philosophy and religion and their relation with science, are closely concerned with the conception of knowledge and truth. Again, the nature of

1. F. H. Heinemann. Hibbert Journal. October, 1957. p. 46.

knowledge or truth decides the types of methods to be employed to attain it. Different types of knowledge require different types of methods for their attainment. From methods we come to Ultimate Reality, known in its totality as Absolute in Philosophy and God in religion. Another equally important poise of Reality is self and individuality which must find its due place in the Ultimate. In the tradition of the Upanishads, from self we pass to the world and creation; the relation of one and Many, Being and Becoming. Here, the concept of evolution is most important, so much so that besides its numerous references we had to give it two full Chapters. Uptill now, Having first dealt with the nature of ultimate reality, in Chapters IX and X we have examined the value of religion and yoga to realise this evolutionary purpose in man and Nature. Thus, the entire plan centres around the concept of evolution which is the central theme of Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy.

The method, we have followed is that of construction through criticism. In each Chapter we have begun with the criticism of typical theories on the issue in question, and developed a particular position out of it. From this, we have examined the value of Sri Aurobindo's approach. The logic which we have employed is the logic of integral experience which is a fulfilment of all experiences. Thus, we have everywhere accepted the fundamental truths underlying each rival theory. What, we have disputed is their claim to be the sole truth which, we maintain, must be integral and should not annul but integrate all other truths. Thus, our aim is more a synthesis than a criticism of other theories. At the end of every chapter, we have concluded our views on the problem.

The present work is based on the fundamental postulate that experience is the base of all Philosophy. The more integral the experience, the more integral will be the Philosophy based upon it. Philosophy should find place for all types of experiences, sensual, religious, occult, vital, spiritual etc. The relation between Philosophy and Religion is the closest, since both approach the same ultimate Reality if only through different ways. Integral Reality must satisfy religion as well as Philosophy. It satisfies our whole being. Absolute, to be truly worthy of its name, must include all

appearances and reject none. A true Philosophy is a Philosophy of affirmation. A catholic and synthetic approach is the need of the time. Philosophy should be close to life. It should bridge the gulf between man and man and man and Nature. The widest and the most comprehensive seeing is the wisest one. Logic must be based on experience. Methods should change according to the type of enquiry. In science, philosophy, religion, psychology or any other branch of human knowledge, the integral theory should find place for all other theories, show their limitations and weld them all in an integral whole. Different branches of human knowledge need not conflict among themselves. Philosophy should present a "weltanshauung" which justifies the truth of each branch of knowledge.

CHAPTER I

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

"Both for spiritual and philosophical knowledge it is necessary to be clear and precise in one's use of terms so as to avoid confusion of thought and vision, by confusion in the words we use to express them".

—*Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual* No. 6, p. 43.

To define a concept is to fix its bounds or limits, to determine with precision, to describe accurately or to fix, the meaning of it. Thus definition is an explanation of the exact meaning of the concept. The most universal concepts of human reason, however, are the most undefinable and yet human thought, in its urge for more and more clarification, always stands in need of defining them. The philosopher has constantly to reflect on these concepts till they are matured enough to interpret the Reality corresponding to them, with the utmost approximation. Besides logical analysis, such a reflection is based on the meaning of the concept which in its turn is related to the experience to which it corresponds. Thus, in the ultimate analysis, to define any concept the philosopher must proceed with the double process of logical analysis of the concept and critical reflection on the experience for which it stands. [The philosopher in his synoptic vision would only point out to the broad and general characteristics of a particular concept. Obviously, a definition of religion or philosophy would not define this or that religion, or any particular philosophy but philosophy or religion in general.]

In this chapter, we have tried to arrive at a clarification of the concepts of philosophy and religion together with their inter-relation. To achieve this purpose, we are proceeding with a twofold process of logical analysis of the concept and a critical survey of the historical treatment of the subject. As a general rule, the history of philosophy is a collection of the reasoned interpretations of the experiences of the individual representing different aspects of Truth. Hence what is desirable is not a destructive criticism of

other approaches, but the assessment of their values in the light of the whole and to find in it a reasonable place for each of them.

THE CONCEPT OF PHILOSOPHY

Aristotle devised Metaphysics, to be studied after physics. Thus etymologically speaking Metaphysics means "after-physics". It is the last science, the science of sciences. It is also the first science, the mother of all sciences. He also calls it the science of Being though such a science is impossible since science deals only with processes of phenomena. Philosophy deals with Being as much as with Becoming. Thus it includes sciences within its ken. Man experiences eternity as well as change. Philosophy as an explanation of the total experience of man seeks the integral truth.

The rationalists, in the early dawn of Modern Philosophy, defined metaphysics as a knowledge deduced from self-evident principles. This attempt at rationalisation or mathematisation of philosophy sought to make it more exact. But metaphysics with thought as its instrument should never dream of being exact like mathematics since thought, though real, cannot be identified with Reality. To be inexact is both a weakness as well as the strength of metaphysics. The philosopher is a lover of knowledge and never a sole possessor of it. The complete comprehension of Infinite by Finite, is a logical impossibility and yet the destiny of man lies in progressing for an ever near approximation to it. Human thought which always bifurcates Reality into form and essence, subject and object, "that" and "what", can never truly represent the Reality which is an all inclusive spiritual unity. Philosophy is not a matter of logico-mathematical deduction or induction[1]. The laws of Geometry are not applicable to Metaphysics any more than they are applicable to Chemistry or Physiology. Every new field of experience has its own laws. Philosophy, the moment it loses touch with immediate experience of Reality forgets its way in the wilderness of human ratiocinations which lead us nowhere.

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1. "It is subtler even than chemical subtlety and therefore not to be deduced, induced, inferred or discovered by a reasoning which proceeds from a consideration of the elements of name and form and makes that its standard".
—*Sri Aurobindo, The Advent,* Vol. X No. 2, p. 95.

The necessity of basing philosophy on experience was loudly proclaimed by the opposite school of empiricists represented by Locke, Berkley and Hume. Locke pointed out that for its content the form and instrument of metaphysics is dependent on experience. This was a great corrective to rationalistic extreme and yet by confining metaphysics to mere sense experience, the empiricists shifted the balance in the opposite direction which led to the negation of all Metaphysics. This is obvious, since if sense experience is the only experience, Philosophy is a mere wild goose chase. To be itself, philosophy should widen its field to include all types of experience, religious, moral, scientific, spiritual, etc. Hume denied the supremacy of Reason. But if reason is a slave to passion, the refutation of reason, being itself a ratiocination, stands self-condemned. All refutations of reason are subject to hysteron—proteron. Hume's "criticism of rationalism and reductio ad absurdum of empiricism" however, gives a lesson which philosophy should not forget. Reason is its surest instrument but to get its data, it should rely on experience.

Kant combines the Baconian idea of the extension of knowledge with the Cartesian idea of certainty. But he also fights shy of all metaphysics in the ultimate sense. Only the metaphysic of Nature and metaphysic of Knowledge is possible. Thus, it was left to Hegel to revive in full vigour the ultimate status of philosophy. The object of philosophy according to him, is to search out the concept, the purpose, the significance of phenomena and to assign to these their corresponding positions in the world and in the system of knowledge. It systematises the values in a unified whole. Here for the first time we find a true view of Philosophy as a systematisation of values and facts. But by the identification of Nature with Logic[2], Hegel arrives at an intellectualism which led Bradley to assert with a vengeance, "Metaphysics is the finding of bad reasons for what we believe on instinct[3]."

This curt remark is a timely warning to all who attempt at reduction of Reality to mere thought but its rejection of all metaphysical speculation as bad reasons appears to be too sweep-

2. Hegel, "Preface to the Philosophy of Right."
3. F. H. Bradley, "Appearance and Reality (Preface)."

ing. The intellect is not rejected in Spirit but transformed into a better instrument to receive the truth.

Bergson's approach here seems to be more balanced than that of Bradley. Philosophy, according to him, must take into account not only sensory but also Mental and intuitive experiences. It must be based on Real experience[4]. Bergson shows a true insight into the problem when he points out that the differenee between various schools of Pbilosophy is because of their fragmentary glimpse of Reality, supplemented by different kinds of intellectual interpretation and elaboration. He suggests that by mutual comparison and elimination of peculiarities, philosophers may grasp the universal character of basic Reality[5].

Again, Philosophy according to Bergson, "does not only facilitate speculation ; it gives us also more power to act and live. For with it we feel ourselves no longer isolated in humanity, humanity no longer seems isolated in the Nature that it dominates[6]." Finaly, Bergson is an anti-intellectualist only when by intellect he means the faculty in its usual capacity in practical life, intellect working on data supplied by sense-perception. Otherwise, the intellect may cooperate with intuition by assembling the data of intuition and forming fluid concepts[7]. Intuition and Reason are equally indispensable instruments of Philosophy.

Contemporary thought witnesses a chaos in the field of Metaphysics. All sorts of arguments have been advanced to support widely divergent views of Reality. All kinds of reactions are raising head under high sounding names of 'isms'. All types of methods have been put to test. The purpose of Nature beneath all this burning cauldron of ideologies, however, seems to be the manifestation of an integral Philosophy which may reconcile all and transcend all, and rouse itself from its dogmatic slumber. A true Philosophy is an "esprite de ensemble," a synoptic vision of

4. "Philosophy can only be an effort to dissolve again into the whole, the 'ocean of life in which we are immersed', 'whence we draw the very force to labour and to live' and from which both matter and intellect originate."
—*Bergson, Creative Evo ution,* p. 202.

5. "The object of Philosophy would be realised if this intuition could be sustained, generalised and above all, assured of external points of referenee in order of not to go astray." —*Bergson, Creative Evolution.* p. 252.

6. Bergson, Creative Evolution. p. 285.

7. *Ibid.* p. 251.

Reality. It is the intellectual search for the fundamental truth of things.

It is generally agreed by all that philosophy must be based on experience but as we have already seen, often the term experience has been limited to certain specific regions. The root fallacy underlying all the conflicting schools of Philosophy is a shift from the centre to periphery, an exaltation of part as whole, a dogmatic denial of everything beyond the limited ken of intellect and finally, an unwarranted application of the logic of finite to the matters of the Infinite. ["The work of Philosophy" as Sri Aurobindo rightly points out, "is to arrange the data given by the various means of knowledge, excluding none and put them into synthetic relation to the one truth, the one supreme and universal Reality[8]."] Philosophy should be all comprehensive, affirmative, synthetic and spiritual. Philosophy, meaning love of wisdom (philos=love, Sophia=wisdom) should be distinguished from mere opinion. Knowledge, as the Indians conceived it, is the knowledge of that by knowing which everything else can be known[9]. Thus, philosophy is the knowledge of Ultimate Reality. But Ultimate Reality, as Indian Philosophy truly maintains, is not only Existence but also Consciousness and Bliss. Hence Philosophy as the quest after ultimate truth, is science of value par excellence[10]. It should not only criticise facts but also satisfy human aspirations. It should synthesise value and existencc, religion and science. [To quote Sri Aurobindo, "it should be a discovery of the real reality of things by which human existence can learn its law and aim and principle of its perfection[11]."]

PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE

Thus, the ancient Indian conception of Philosophy, with its emphasis on practice and discipline, needs to be revived. Philosophy should be close to life. [The quest of truth for its own sake has its importance in Philosophy and its practical bearing need

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8. The Renaissance in India. p. 72.
9. "कस्मिन्नु, खलु, भगवी विज्ञाने सर्वमिंद विज्ञानं भवति
—Mundakopanisad I. i.3.
10 Prof. S. K. Maitra, Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual Vol. II, p. 61.
11. Human Cycle. p. 93.

not be over-emphasised. But, as Sri Aurobindo aptly puts it, "still the truth once discovered must be realisable in our inner being and our outer activities; if it is not, it may have an intellectual but not an integral importance; a truth for the intellect, for our life, it would be no more than the solution of a thought puzzle or an abstract reality or a dead letter[12]."] Philosophy influences the life of men, individual as well social. As Aldous Huxley said, "Men live in accordance with their Philosophy of life, their conception of the world[13]."

The existentialist revolt in our times characteristically expresses this demand. It is a revolt agaist logical or naturalistic mechanism, analytical rationalism and fossilised thought, which tends to sap the vital sources of philosophy, reducing it to a barren pursuit after theories which have nothing to do with our practical life. Similarly, Pragmatism emphasises the pragmatic value of truth. Humanism revives the protegorian teaching of homo-mensura. Instrumentalism defines knowledge as a mere instrument for successful action in life[14].

Now, it is a great merit of all these approaches that they emphasise the need for making Philosophy serve some purpose, but they err in confining it to the narrow limits of human life. Philosophy as a science of value should lead us to the supreme value, God. Pragmatic value of truth should get its reasonable place in the system of values but it cannot be the highest, still less, the only value. To be a man fully, we should transcend man and hence not man but superman shall be the measure of all things. Philosophy serves life but life serves spirit, and hence spirituality and not life is the summum bonum of Philosophy.

The value—philosopher Windelband truely defined philosophy as "the critical science of universal value." But he entirely missed the fact that the kingdom of Philosopy includes both. "Beurteilungen" (judgements of value) as well as "Urteile" (judgements of relation). To exalt value, in isolation from existence,

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12. Life Divine Vol. II Edition II, p. 456.
13. Ends and Means, p. 252.
14. "Whenever Philosophy has been taken seriously, it has always been assumed that it signified achieving a wisdom that would influence the conduct of life."

—*Prof. John Dewey Democracy and Education*, p. 378.

ideal, without any connection with actual, as many of the philosophers of value did, is to render values impotent and to reduce Philosophy to a mere idle dreaming. Values are not abstractions but concrete realities. The gulf between L. W. Sterns 'stand point of things' and 'stand point of persons,' and Munsterberg's 'world of values' and 'world of facts', is unwarranted. It is the one supreme, Absolute which is the basis of both the stand point of things and the stand point of persons, which is equally the essence of the world facts and the world of values. Fichte's world of moral values is only one side of the story. Rickert's "West an Sich" represents only one aspects of value. Philosophy deals not only with mental but also supramental and imfRamental values. Values are both immanent as well as transcendent, subjective as well as objective. Philosophy, as a conceptual approach to Reality, includes all types of values and facts.

PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

Fichte suggested that the kind of philosophy a man has, depends on the sort of man he is. Philosophy is a reasoned interpretation of philosopher's own experience. Now, science is also based on experience. This similarity brings us to the problem of the relation of Metaphysics with Scienee. According to Prof, R. G. Colling Wood, "Any attack on metaphysics is an attack on the foundations of science[15]". This emphasis on the relation of science and metaphysics, however, seeks to degenerate Philosophy into a mere superstructure on the basis of science. It is because Metaphysics deals with the propositions underlying the ordinary science that the unity between the two has been posited. Science and Metaphysics on the other hand, are united in the one underlying basic unity of Infinite Existence. Science deals with Nature and Metaphysics with Being and since Being corresponds to Nature, Science and Metaphysics are interrelated. As Sri Aurobindo truly puts it. "Neither the laws nor the possibilities of physical nature can be entirely known unless we know also the laws and possibilities of supra-physical nature[16]." The failures of science, though no argument for the truths of metaphysics, indi-

15. An Essay on Metaphysics. p. 170.
16. 'Human Cycle'. p. 92.

cate the limits beyond which science must give place to metapbysics.

Science can provide us with instruments but not with the solution of the fundamental problems of human race. Without the knowledge of the essence and purpose of our existence the instrument may prove to be more fatal than useful. Hence the need for Philosophy. Yet, in our Zeal for Philosophy, we must not reject science, since the knowledge of the processes is as much necessary as the knowledge of the goal[17]. Hence, Science and Metaphysics are interdependent.

But interdependence is no excuse for abolishing differences. Both Science and Metaphysics have their independent fields of enquiry and different methods of approach. Science is a systematic knowledge of a particular kind of experience, while metaphysics deals with experience as a whole. Science deals with Phenomena, the Nature; Metaphysics seeks to know the Noumena, the Supernature. Both Science and Metaphysics use reason as their instrument. But in Science, the reason is a mixed one which cannot sound the depths of Being and which surveys mere outskirts of experience, unravels the tangled knots of sense-data, classifies and compares them and forms some general workable hypotheses. Metaphysics, on the other hand, works by pure reason or to be more exact, through Consciousness. It seeks to know the uitimate truth of existence. It employs what Śaṁkara calls 'súddha tarka' as distinguished from 'Śuśka Tarka.' To sum up, Philosophy must take due consideration of all types of experiences, conscious, sub-conscious, super-conscious; religious, scientific, moral, social and others. The philosopher, as Plato said, is "a lover, not of a part of wisdom only but of whole[18]." This is the bed-rock on which the extremes may meet[19]. Again, every sound metaphysics must solve the problems of its age and interpret the

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17. "Science is a right knowledge in the end, only of processes, but still the knowledge of processes too is part of a total wisdom and essential to a wide and a clear approach towards the deeps truth behind."

—*Sri Aurobindo, "Evolution"*, p. 29.

18. Republic Book VI. p. 475.

19. "Only by an extension of the field of consciousness and an unhoped for increase in our instruments of knowledge, can the ancient quarrel be decided".

—*Sri Aurobindo. The Life Divine,* Voll I. IInd Edition, p. 25.

truth according to the needs of the time. It is the form and not the essence which changes. The systems of philosophy should be judged by the standards of their time.

ANTI-METAPHYSICS

Some anti-metaphysical movements in our age have questioned the value of Philosophy. Without trying to defend metaphysics against their arguments we simply wish to point out with Prof. Collingwood, that their's is a criticism of Pseudo-metaphysics[20]. In the first place, a true metaphysics is more practical than science, since it always goes deep to the root of the problems. In fact, what we need is a better Philosophy, truer, more synthetic and wide enough to meet the needs of the time. Secondly, Philosophy cannot be rejected for not being verified. Though its absolute propositions cannot be verified like the relative ones of science, yet they are immediately veredical and hence most certain. The negative approach of a Bradley or Nāgārjuna has its reason only in asserting that reason, without its basis in concrete experience, leads us no where. Otherwise Philosophy is irrepressible. A negation of Philsophy is a Philosophy of negation. All anti-philosophical judgements are subject to hysteron-proteron. But reason is not the last limit. In the immediate realisation of Spirit, when we arrive at pure knowledge, there is no need of reason. The integral knowledge is possible not through reason but through consciousness which can know Reality through direct realisation. The seers maintain that on the supra-mental plane, all philosophy becomes a seeing, a direct vision of truth. [This is what Sri Aurobindo has called the Supramental Knowledge, the future successor of intellectual philosophy.] But this is only possible when man evolves into superman. Till the advent of the race of gnostic beings, Philosophy cannot do away with reason, since to be universal at the mental stage, it must be rational.

THE CONCEPT OF RELIGION

Literally speaking, religion is a principle of unification and harmonisation (Latin : Religio onis ; Re = Back ; Ligare = bind).

20. An Essay on Metaphysics, p. 48.

The term religion suggests that the two objects of unification were originally unified and have been only temporarily separated. Religion is thus based on the faith in the ultimate unity of man and God, the finite and Infinite, and hence, any religion which posits a permanent gap between man and God, covertly denies its claim to be called a religion. If a man is not essentially divine, all religion is impossible. A religion based on materialism, meliorism, ethicism or pragmatism, defeats its purpose. Admitted, that the term religion itself has no reference to Divine, but can there be a real union of man with any one else than Him. Can the union with finite be as perfect as the union with Infinite? By the very nature of the case, the finite love will be always limited and therefore frustrated. Every religion, which seeks to unite man with any one else than Divine, is always bound to remain imperfect. The only religion, worthy of its name would be a religion of Divine. The religion of man, to achieve its end must transcend into the religion of superman.

Hegelians, in defining religion emphasise on the element of reason in it. As Prof. McTaggart says, "Religion is clearly a state of mind....It seems to me that it may best be described as an emotion resting on a conviction of harmony besween ourselves and the universe at large[21]." Such a view presupposes a certain kind of rational knowledge as a necessary element in all religion, but many religious beings never philosophised, nor ever developed any kind of rational thinking. Love, which is the most potent instrument of religion, is neither feeling nor cognition, but a psychic phenomenon. The confusion of psychic with mental or vital has been responsible for so many misunderstandings about the nature of religion. In a certain sense, revelation in religion, may be identified with the activity of pure reason, but the faith which impels man to God is not reason, pure or mixed, but inner psychic certainty of the divine destiny of man. Religion is not, "the exaltation of the object released from the chains of mind[22]" as Gentile conceived it; nor is it, "what the individual does with

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21. Some Dogmas of religion. p. 3.
22. The theory of mind as Pure Act, p. 227, Eng. Trans. by H. Wildon Carr. (Macmillan)

his own solitariness[23]," as Whitehead puts it. It is neither objective nor subjective but psychic, which includes both subjective and objective. Spirituality is the raison d'etre of all religion.

Another group of thinkers like Schleirmacher, and Ritschel etc., exalt the element of feeling as the main characteristic in defining religion. It is mysteriam-Fascinatum-Tremendom. It makes us shudder but at the same time we are drawn towards it. Such a view, however, tends to degenerate religion into an infra-rational one. But religion, as faith in the realisation of God, is supra-rational. It is not what Bradley calls 'instinct' and 'sentient experience'. It is an intuitive psychic certainty.

The moralists emphasise the moral aspect of religion. Mathew Arnold defines religion as "nothing but morality touched with emotion." Kant emphasises the primary of moral will and brings in God only as a moral postulate. "Morality," says Bradley, "is led beyond itself into a higher form of goodness, it ends in what we may call religion[24]." "It is a moral duty not to be moral," runs the paradox and this is "the duty to be religious[25]. These views, typical as they are, tend to confuse psychic with mental. Though not immoral, religion is a moral since the object of religion transcends all human values. Religion as psychic urge includes thought, will and feeling and yet it is more than all this.

Like Whitehead, William James defined religion as, "the feelings, acts and experience of individual men in their solitude so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine.[26]" This definition though true in emphasising the divine element in religion, forgets the objective and communal aspect of it. Both Whitehead and James forget the aspect of salvation and freedom from limitations in which the man is lifted from his solitude into a Divine presence. The definition of religion as 'a flight of the alone to the alone'[27] represents the class of mystics who lay on exclusive emphasis on individual

23. Religion in the Making, p. 6.
24. Appearance ana Reality, p. 388.
25. Ibid. p. 391.
26. Varieties of religious experience, p. 32.
27. Plotinus. The Neo Platonists, p. 103.

liberation. The spirit of the modern age, on the otherhand, is more truly represented in Sri Aurobindo's ideal of cosmic liberation. A union with Divine in all its integrity is not possible unless we feel unity with our fellow-beings. To be alone in the religious sense, should connote, to be in the presence of the Divine, who is not exclusive of any person or group or interest, but is the end all and be all of all things.

Hoffding defines religion as, "the faith in the conservation of value[28]". This definition, whereas it rightly perceives the essence of Religion in value, tends to obscure the practical aspect of it. Religion is not faith in mere conservation but in realisation of value. Again, the value as essential of religion is not moral alone; since God is a moral. Alexander rightly criticises this definition as too reflective. But in saying that God cannot be called the Highest Value because there is no unvalue with which He can be contrasted,[29] Alexander confuses the absolute predicate with relative ones. If a thing has value, it is in contrast to some unvalue, since all predicates, affirmed about finite things, are relative. But applied to God, the case is otherwise. All that is said about God is absolutely predicated. All that exists in God exists absolutely and does not require the negation of its opposite. Again, according to Alexander, "Religion is faith in Deity" or, "it is the sentiment that we are drawn towards Him and caught in the movement of the world to a higher level of experience.[30]" This definition clears some salient points of religion. It points out, firstly, that religion moves us to God and to a higher experience and secondly, that it is faith in God. But the need of realisation has been missed. Alexander points out, that value will originate only when Deity is realised, but then, paradoxically, it shall cease to be Deity, since then the nisus moves forward to the Deity of Deity and so on ad-infinitum[31]. Thus, God is never identified with value. But such a possible God does not satisfy the demands of religion. Religion without an actual God, is a contradiction in terms. The God of religion must be actual and

28. Quoted by Alexander in 'Space, Time and Deity'. Vol. II, p. 408.
29. Ibid. p. 410. 30. Ibid. p. 429. 31. Ibid p. 348.

supreme and hence the highest value. That which affects must be real by the very virtue of its workability. God effects our life, hence He is actual.

Religion, as Dr. Maitra significantly puts it, is, "faith in the realisation of value.[32]" Now, a value may or may not be actual but the object of religion is real. Again, as we have already seen, God is the highest value in whom all values are conserved. God combines value and existence. He is both supreme value as well as ultimate existence. Hence, religion may be defined as faith in the realisation of God. It does not aim after this or that value but only the Highest Value, the Divine itself. [To sum up in the words of Sri Aurobindo, "The inmost essence of religion... ...is the search for God and finding of God. Its aspiration is to discover the infinite, the Absolute, the One, the Divine who is all these things and yet no abstraction but a Being. Its work is a sincere living out of the true and ultimate relations between man and God, relations of unity, relations of difference, relations of an illuminated knowledge, an ecstatic love and delight, an absolute surrender and service, a casting of every part of our existence out of its normal status into an uprush of man towards the Divine and a descent of the Divine into man.[33]"]

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

Philosophy is a rational systematisation of facts and values and religion is faith in the realisation of God, the Supreme all-inclusive value. Hence, the talk of a philosophy of religion, is to explain as best as it can, in its own language and to the rational and intellectual parts of man, the truths, the experiences, the laws of religion. To render the individual experience universal, reason and language are indispensable, however inadequate they may be in interpreting religious experience. Philosophy of religion is a rational interpretation and critical analysis of religious experience. It is a good antidote to all kinds of dogmatism and irrationalism in religion, which have been responsible for so much abuse of its

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32. *Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual,* Vol II, p. 61,
33. Human Cycle, p. 160.

name[34]. Faith is not a reasoned conviction, Religion is not a matter of reason. But, it should be able to present its credentials to rational criticism. True devotion should be based on real truth. Thus, philosophy of religion has the pious duty to discipline religion. The reason controls the infra-rational and opens towards supra-rational. There is a point in affirming that religious experience is ineffable due to its element of supra-rational. But, to purge religion of all irrationalism, Philosophy is a necessary requisite.

Philosophy, however, must not try to dissect the supra-rational element of religion. The philosopher, who sets out to discuss religion, must himself be religious. No amount of rational reflection can make any one to understand religion, unless he himself has a certain personal experience. All efforts to explain the experiences of religion, by simple observation and analysis, are riddled with psychologist's fallacy. Religion without philosophy, is a boat without rudder, but the rudder, by that reason, is no substitute for a boat.

Philosophy of religion must be based on experience. All its problems, faith, worship, tradition, revelation and immortality etc. are strains and stresses with in experience. All the confusions of the Philosophy of religion crop up only when reason tries to criticise religion without any aid of actual experience. Such efforts appear like a child's play, who does not understand the ways of adult. All efforts at a science of religion, based merely on observation, classification and generalisations, are vain chimeras. It is so, because as Sri Aurobindo points out, "Even in those parts of religious knowledge which seem most to resemble intellectual operations, the illuminating faculties are not imagination, logic and rational judgement, but revelations, inspirations, intuitions, intuitive discernments which leap down to us from a plane of supra-rational light[35]." A science of religion, strictly speaking, is not possible at all, since in spite of many overt similari-

34. "Religion could not stand for a moment if it did not support itself by intellectual presentation, however inadequate, of prefound truths".
—*Sri Aurobindo. Views and Reviews*, p. 2.

35. The Human Cycle. p. 160-61.

ties, the aims as well as the methods of science and religion are different. We cannot know the essence of religious experience by collection of data, their classification and comparison, and finally, by formation of some general hypothesis.

Religious experience cannot be explained by intellect without the use of figures, symbols and analogies. Language is a symbolic expression of the facts of experience. Hence, it must be rendered plastic to suit various kinds of data. The language should adapt itself to experience and not vice versa. Philosophy must learn to understand the language of religion, the meaning of its visions and symbols. Then alone, it can serve religion as a true Philosophy of it.

PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION AND SCIENCE

Every branch of human knowledge has its reason, its merit and its own sphere of work and each is helpful in the dialectical progression of knowledge. Philosophy logically arranges the eternal modes of Sat. Religion practically and vitally arranges the personal relations of Sat. Science arranges the particular forms and modes of Sat through observation and analysis. Philosophy is a systematisation by critical analysis, religion is faith in union with Divine and Science the observation and analysis of its particular forms. Thus, all are interrelated in the One Supreme Divine, which is their common subject matter. All pursue God in various ways. All look to Him from their own perspective. The ultimate truths of Philosophy are held realisable in religion. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "a religion that is not the expression of Philosophic truth degenerates into superstition and obscurantism and a Philosophy which does not dynamise itself with the religious spirit is a barren light for it cannot get itself practised[36]." While Philosophy satisfies the mind, religion satisfies the heart and since the Reality must satisfy our whole being, both are equally necessary.[37] Hegel's exaltation of Philosophy, as the highest, is vitiated by the fallacy of the substitution

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36. Ideal and progress. p. 56.

37. "The heart and the mind are universal Deity and neither a mind without heart nor a heart without mind in the human ideal."

—*Sri Aurobindo. Views and Reviews.* p. 3.

of mere part for the whole. All Philosophy, Religion and Science are mere means for the realisation of the integral knowledge of the Divine.

Philosophy is theoretical and religion practical. Theory without practice is an important mental conviction and practice without theory is a mere blind impulse. The task of religion is to lead man to Superman, to give him a mould of spirituality and to lead him to the plane of Spirit, through the ignorance of mental plane. Kant's agnosticism in his '**Critique of Pure Reason**', is a lesson to the votaries of intellectual Philosophy. It is high time that Philosophy should wake up out of its dogmatic slumbers and cease to be a hand-maid of Science. The values must be placed again on their high pedestal, and Philosophy should become spiritual.

We do not wish to maintain that all Philosophy without religion is useless. The pursuit of truth for its own sake has its value, and even a Philosophy without religion can give us at least some light about the spiritual destiny of man. The importance of the truths of epistemology cannot be undervalued by any serious thinker. The demonstration of the irrepressibility of self and thought has its own value, Logic trains the intellect and removes doubts. But the ultimate truth can only be grasped by a coalscence of Philosophy with religion.[38]

All knowledge, is the knowledge of God. We live, move and have our being in Divine. From God to God is our journey. "To get at this as a spiritual presence is the aim of religion, to grow into harmony with its nature of light, love, strength and purity is the aim of ethics, to enjoy and mould ourselves into the harmony of its eternal beauty and delight is the aim and consumnation of our acsthetic need and nature to know and to be according to its eternal principles of truth is the end of Science and Philosophy and of all our insistent drive towards knowledge.[39] "Thus, Philosophy, religion and science have their own Swadharma and

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38. "Science takes possession of the measures and utilities of force, rational philosophy pursues reason to its last subtletics, but inspired Philosophy and religion can seize hold of the highest secret, ultismam rahasyam."
—*Sri Aurobindo. Heraclitus.* p. 60.

39. The Human Cycle. p. 191.

their own methods to achieve the goal. In the integral knowledge, neither of these is subordinated to the other, still less is any annihilated, but all are transformed to become still better instruments of spiritual evolution. A Philosophic statement about self is merely a rational formula, and yet it may serve to remove a great barrier and subdue the revolting intellect to the truth of Spirit. Similar touches may be attained in religion, ethics or science. [To quote Sri Aurobindo, "All religion, all occult knowledge, all supernormal psychological experience and discipline are sign posts, and directions pointing us upon that road of progress of the occult self-unfolding Spirit.[40]"]

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40. The Life Divine. Vol. II, Second Edition. p. 654.

CHAPTER II

KNOWLEDGE AND TRUTH

"For that is, in the end, the real value of philosophy for man, to give him light in the nature of his being, the principles of his psychology, his relations with the world and with God, the fixed lines or the great possibilities of his destiny."

—*Sri Aurobindo, Heraclitus*. p. 45.

An integral Knowledge and Truth is the perennial quest of all Philosophy. Knowledge is the comprehension of Reality. Truth is an attribute of judgement. The judgements based on knowledge are true while those based on ignorance lead to error. Thus, Knowledge and Truth, Ignorance and Error are correlative. Philosophy seeks to define these and also to distinguish between them. This distinction has a far-reaching significance on the nature of Philosophy. The nature of self, world and God is determined by the conception of Knowledge and its relation with Ignorance. Hence, to arrive at a critical evaluation of these concepts in a particular Philosophy, we must first determine the consistency of its views about Knowledge and Ignorance, Truth and Error. This is the purpose which we have sought to achieve in this chapter by means of our adopted method of construction through criticism.

THE UPANISADIC VIEW

The antinomy of Knowledge and Ignorance had its dawn as early as the Vedas and Upanisads. In Upanisads, the Vedic terms Citti and Acitti are replaced by the familiar antinomy of Vidyā and Avidyā. Vidyā is the knowledge of the One, Avidyā, the knowledge of Many. The status of Becoming is undoubtedly inferior to the status of Being and yet the Upanisads maintain that it is the Being that becomes all that is in the universe. Knowledge according to Upanisads, is the search for the arché of existence. "What is that which being known everything else becomes

known.[1]" Thus the Upanisads searched after the source, the substratum, the stuff, and the cause of the empirical world. In the Kena Upanisad the pupil asks, "At whose wish does the mind send forth proceed on its errand? At whose command does the first breath go forth? At whose wish do we utter this speech? What God directs the eye or the ear?" Thus, the Upanisads wanted to know the director behind senses and mind. The object of enquiry was the transmundane since the mundane failed to satisfy their urge. "What is the real root", asked Yājnavalkya, from which the tree of life springs again and again, even though knocked and cut down by that dark cutter[2]." The eschatological knowledge was regarded as most precious of all and yet the quest into the ultimate was supreme. Thus, Knowledge according to Upanisads is the knowledge of the one essent of all existence, and the method to realise it. This was Vidyā as contrasted to Avidyā which is the sensual, the mental, knowledge of the phenomenal the temporal and the many. This is also the view of Sri Aurobindo. As he frankly admits, "........the cencept of Reality and of Knowledge, enveloping in one view the cosmic and the Absolute coincides fundamentally with our own for it implies that ignorance too is a half-veiled knowledge, and world-knowledge a part of self knowledge[3]." The Upanisads do not make a gulf between Vidyā and Avidyā. God cannot be known without Vidyā and yet Avidyā is not non-existent or unreal. The lower is transcendent by the higher and yet it is not annulled but transfigurated in a higher integral whole. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "Not to abandon the lower to itself but to transfigure it in the light of the higher to which we have attained is the true nature of divinity.[4]"

THE NON-DUALISM OF ŚAMKARA

This integral approach of the Upanisads, however, was soon led to its logical extreme in the Non-dualism of Śaṁkara. Śaṁkara distinguished between transcendental and empirical (पारमार्थिक,

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1. Mundakopanisad. I. i. 3.
2. Brhderanyake Upanisad. III. 9. 28.
3. Life Divine. Vol. II Second Edition. p. 418.
4. Life Divine Vol. I. p. 45.

व्यावहारिक) knowledge. The empirical knowledge, it is observed, is conditioned by mental modifications arising from the contact of senses with sensibility; it appears and disappears: "चक्षुः संयुत्कान्तः करण वृतिः साक्रियते इति जायते विनश्यति च ॥[5]" Eternal knowledge on the contrary does not appear and disappear as it is the very essence of the knower (द्रष्टुः स्वरुपत्वात). This eternal knowledge may be called the "Knowledge of the knower", ("द्रष्टुं दृष्टिः") as distinct from sense knowledge. There can be no destruction of sense-knowledge which Śaṁkara like Plato, calls "the shadow" (प्रतिच्छाया) of the knower's knowledge.

At the end of the commentary on four sutras, Śaṁkara quotes in his favour three verses of a certain Brahman-knower identified as one Āchāryā Sundara Pāndya. Of these the last Sútra goes thus, "As the cognition of the self in the body is assumed to be valid knowledge, even so is this empirically valid knowledge (assumed to be valid) upto the ascertainment of the self."

"देहात्य प्रत्ययोयद्व त्प्रमाणत्वेन कल्पिेनः
लौकिकं यद्वदे वेदं प्रमोणं त्वाऽऽत्मनिश्चयात् इति"[6]

Thus, here Śaṁkara maintains that the so-called ignorance is the cause of all knowledge. It is also the mode for us in respect to intuition of non-duality, which, being a particular psychosis of internal organs, is not absolutely and invariably real. Śaṁkara says, "Therefore 'I am Brahman': in this alone terminate all injunctions of the other means of valid knowledge."

"तस्मादद ब्रह्मास्मी त्येतदवसाना एव सर्वे विधय :
सर्वाणि वेतणशी प्रमाणानि ॥"[7]

Perception and inference and all other pramānas of knowledge, which are essentially based on a differentiation of knower and known, subject and object, perceiver and perceived, ultimately merge in the realization of non-dual self. Thus Ignorance has its utility as leading to knowledge.

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5. S. Com. on Brh. Up.
6. S. B. I. i. 4.
7. *Ibid.*

Such a conception of ignorance, however, is not consistent with Śaṁkara's Philosophy since as he proceeds, he rejects ignorance as Mithyā (false) Mayā (illusion), avidyā (false knowledge), and even non existent. Śaṁkara is anxious to find a place for worldly knowledge by his distinction between Vyā Vhārik and Pārmārthik levels, but the gulf between the two is left unbridged and we pass to knowledge as if by a jump. As Sri Aurobindo points out, "To live in the Cosmic Ignorance is a blindness, but to confine oneself in an exclusive absolutism of knowledge is also a blindness: to know Brahman is at once and together the Knowledge and the Ignorance, to attain the supreme status atonce by the Becoming and the Non-Becoming, to relate together realisation of the transcendent and the cosmic self, to achieve foundation in the supramundane and a self-aware manifestation in the mundane, is the integral knowledge; that is the possession of immortality[8]."

Bradley also reaches his Absolute in some such manner and yet in It the appearances are not rejected but some-how reconciled in the whole. Here in a way, ignorance is given a place in Knowledge. But ignorance has no place in Samkara's system. He says, "Therefore perception and other means of valid knowledge have reference only to what is characterised by Nescience.[9]" "तस्माद् विद्या वद्धि विषयान्येव प्रत्यक्षादीनि प्रमाणानि शास्त्राणि च।" Two arguments are advanced to prove this proposition. Firstly, that the soul is not a knower and hence the pramanas do not apply to it, and Secondly, "because there is no distinction from beasts etc.[10]"

"पश्वादि मिश्चा विशेतात् ।।"

But if so then Śaṁkāra cannot consistently maintain the possibility of liberation while living, since so long as the self is confined in body with senses, etc., man is bound to behave like beasts. Rāmānuja rightly raises the question that if every source of knowledge has reference with what is characterised by ne-science, how the approach to truth is at all possible. Here Śaṁkara is led to

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8. Life Divine. Vol. II Second Edition. p. 419.
9. S. B. I. i. 1.
10. *Ibid.*

admit that the Sāstras at least tell us what the self is not. But how can truth be known by falsehood? Or who knows if the knower is non-existent? Again, if the knower as well as ignorance is false and illusion, all endeavours for salvation, all scriptures, etc. are meaningless. On Śaṁkara's premises, as Sri Aurobindo points out, "Therefore we arrive at the escape of an illusory non-existent soul from an illusory non-existent bondage in an illusory non-existent world as the supreme good which that non-existent soul has to pursue.[11]" Śaṁkara missed the real significance of the vedantic method of showing the Arundhati Star. In the regressive method of knowledge, no step is absolutely false or non-existent but each step in ignorance is a step to knowledge. Knowledge is not a jump from ignorance but a gradual unveiling. The highest truth, the integral self knowledge is not to be gained by a self blinded leap into the Absolute, but by a patient transit into the Truth Consciousness, where the Infinite can be known, felt, seen, experienced in all the fulness of its unending riches. Evidently, this is not a matter of dialectical reasoning. Illusion, knowledge and Ignorance are terms or results of our consciousness and it is only by looking deeply into ourselves that we can discover and determine the character and relations of the Knowledge and the Ignorance, or of the illusion and the Reality. Ignorance is not the illusory experience of the non-existent Many. Similarly, knowledge is not the consciousness of the Absolute as negating the world, One as transcending the Many, Featureless as opposed to all features; but the realisation of the Brahman, with the world as Its manifestation. Knowledge and Ignorance are not two irreconcilable principles, one creative of world ex'stence, the other destructive of it. They are two co-existent powers, both present in the universe itself, diversely operating in the conduct of it's processes but one in their essence and able to pass by a natural transmutation into each other. It must, however, be noted that Ignorance is dependent on knowledge.

11. Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition p. 47.

PRAGMATIC APPROACH

In contrast to the completely world-negating approach of Advaita, the pragmatists exalt the worldly interests to the pedestal of supreme value. Knowledge, according to pragmatism, is not a revelation of reality, but an instrument, biologically evolved for better practical adjustment. It emphasises more on will than thought. Reality for it, is a changing, developing process. Such a conception of knowledge is a good corrective to those who wish to make philosophy a mere arm-chair affair without any concern with practical life. Its defect is not that it does not go far but that it does not go as far as necessary. Man's necessities are no doubt biological, yet there are higher needs which include these also. Knowledge serves life but life serves Divine. Hence, Knowledge is an instrument not for biological need but for spiritual evolution. Pragmatic knowledge is valid in its own field but that is not the only type of knowledge. A higher knowledge is required to enlighten the course of pragmatic knowledge.

Again, Knowledge, according to Pragmatism, is activity. It is not true in itself but becomes true. Śaṁkara, on the other hand, pointing out to a subtle three fold distinction between knowledge and activity, maintains that knowledge is not mental activity. The two views, however, are not so antagonistic as they appear at first sight. In fact, they represent two types of knowledge, practical and spiritual. Śaṁkara, of course recognises the value of the Phenomenal (Vyāvhārik) knowledge and yet finds no place for it in higher knowledge, thus leaving a gulf between practical and spiritual, life and realisation. A truly integral knowledge, on the other hand finds place for both. The denials of the materialist and ascetic are equally partial. As Sri Aurobindo says, "Our true happiness lies in the true growth of our whole being, in a victory throughout the total range of our existence, the mastery of the inner as well as and more than the outer, the hidden as well as the overt nature ; our true completeness comes not by describing under circles on the plane where we began but by transcendence[12]." Thus, as we

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12. Life Divine. Vol. II Second Edition. p. 532.

progress in integral knowledge we do not reject our needs proper to mental, vital, or physical planes but interpret them in a new way.

THE DUALISM OF KANT

As Śaṁkara in the East, so Kant in the West draws a trenchant line of demarcation between Noumena and Phenomena. The sense-manifold is given through forms of intuition in bits of experience, which are further categorised and unified in transcendental unity of apperception. Our knowledge is determined by our inner mechanism and the "Ding an Sich", escapes as unknowable. Thus, according to the conclusion of the first Critique, knowledge as such is not possible for man. This is the inevitable conclusion of a purely mental approach to knowledge.[13] Kant covertly recognises that there is some-thing which is Timeless, Supramental, Noumenon and Reality as such, from which the senses and mind turn back. Now, Reality cannot be dual or Many exclusively, since to posit any relation between them a third entity shall be indispensable, in whose unity the two shall meet. Again, if Reality is one, we must admit that Vidyā and Avidyā are two powers of the same consciousness. Now, either the two powers must be completely unconnected, a view, which we have already criticised, or they must be the two facts of the same Reality. Ignorance is not nescience but an experience of the reality which is partly true and partly false, as must be all knowledge, which ignores the essence and sees only fugitive parts of the phenomena. The ignorance, though shared by the life and matter, has its roots in mind whose very office is to measure off, limits, particularise and thereby divide. But it also contains the principle and intention of That which exceeds it. By a self exceeding and transformation in supermind it can find and develop its own real essence into a complete form. While rejecting thought as a useless instrument for Knowledge, Bradley forgets

13. "If then, mind is ail or if the apparent mind in us is the index of the nature of our being, we can never be anything more than an Ignorance fleeting through Time and catching at knowledge in a most scanty and fragmentary fashion."

—*Sri Aurobindo. Life Divine Vol. II Second Edition.* p. 256.

that exclusiveness, and not particularising, is the acme of Ignorance. The particularising faculty of mind only becomes ignorance, when it separates itself from the higher principles.

INTEGRALISM OF SRI AUROBINDO

Knowledge, according to Sri Aurobindo, is the same as Brahman, the one, the eternal, the infinite and harmonious. The integral knowledge is already there in the integral Reality. It is not a new or still non-existent thing that has to be created, acquired, learned, invented or built up by the mind. It must rather be discovered or uncovered. It is a Truth that is self-revealed to a spiritual endeavour, for it is there veiled in our deeper and greater self. It is the very stuff of our own spiritual consciousness, and it is by waking to it even in our surface self that we have to possess it. The Ignorance, on the other hand, considered as a power of manifoldly self-absorbed and self limiting concentration of the conscious being, is a natural capacity of variation in his self-conscious knowledge. This is one of the possible poises of the relation of the Absolute in its manifestation.

Consciousness, the fundamental fact of existence, is experienced as operating in three ways. Firstly, there is the Supreme divine self knowledge, embracing unity as well as multiplicity. In contrast to it, is the complete nescience of the consciousness itself, an effective dynamic, creative Inconscience. Between these two, Knowledge and Nescience, is the Ignorance—"Our own characteristic way of the soul's self-withholding of complete self-knowledge." Ignorance is seeking and preparing to transform itself by a progressive illumination of its darkness into the Knowledge, that is already concealed within it.

Knowledge is not only a mental process but a matter of whole being. An integral spiritual consciousness carries in it a knowledge of all the terms of being; it links the highest to the lowest through all the mediating terms and achieves an indivisible whole. The physical, the vital, the mental and finally, the psychical, all equally take part in the achievement of knowledge. Any conflict among them leads to ignorance and error. In integral knowledge, there are three steps of self-achievement, which are at the same time three sides of the same one knowledge. The first

is the discovery of the secret psychic entity. The next step is to realise the eternal self in all beings. The third step is to know the Divine Being who is at once our supreme transcendent self, the cosmic Being, foundation of our universality, and the Divinity within.

The Absolute has four powers of its consciousness, holding together in a single indivisible being. The first, the essential, is at one end, the superconscient silence and at the other end, the Inconscience. The second, the integral, is the total consciousness of Sachchidānanda. the supramental concentration. The third, the multiple, is the method of the totalising or global overmental awareness. The fourth, the separative, is the characteristic nature of the Ignorance. Thus, Ignorance is a poise of the consciousness-Force. There is a limited, practical, self-oblivion exclusive concentration at the root of Ignorance. This is further heightened in man by his habit of exclusively living in present, forgetful of the past as well as future. This existence in the moment is only a pragmatic truth, a half-true, half-false knowledge, an ignorance, since what he forgets is contained in the all-retaining integral consciousness within man. Just as the mind's concentration on one task at a time is not a weakness but strength, so the exclusive concentration of the consciousness on ego, serves a pragmatic purpose. And just as the former can be dissolved by the mind at any time, so the man, though not so easily, can by an arduous self-training, self-deepening, self-heightening, self-expansion, go back to the real self. Hence, in both cases, the difference is phenomenal and not essential. Ignorance is valid in its own sphere, but must be gradually eliminated by knowledge.

THE PURPOSE OF IGNORANCE

"Ignorance", according to Sri Aurobindo, "is Nature's purposeful oblivion of the self and the All, leaving them aside, putting them behind herself in order to do solely what she has to do in some outer play of existence[14]." The purpose of ignorance is to trace the cycle of self-oblivion and self-discovery, for which the secret Spirit assumes ignorance in Nature. Its origin is a limitation of knowledge. Its distinctive character is a separation of the

14. *Ibid.* p. 350.

being from its own integrality and entire reality. Its boundaries are determined by this separative development of the consciousness, for it shuts us to our true self and to the true nature of things, and obliges us to live in an apparent surface existence. Evolution is impossible without ignorance since a progress in knowledge implies an elimination of ignorance. Manifestation is conceivable only if there is a deployment of knowledge through ignorance. An existence without ignorance shall be a static existence, though divine and perfect. Such, of course, is not the world of our experience. The world is neither perfect nor a purposeless fall. A steady and whole view of the world will depict ample design and purpose. To conceive the world as an inexplicable blunder of the All-conscient, is to despair of all human destiny. Ignorance is a purposeful descent, a divine opportunity, a necessary though subordinate term, which the universal knowledge has imposed on itself. The Divine Sachchidānanda descends to find Himself in the apparent opposites of His being and His nature. We, however, for the present drop this theme and intend to resume it more fully in Chapters VI and VIII.

LOCUS OF IGNORANCE

Now, what is the origin, the source, the locus of this ignorance ? According to advaita, it is inexplicable though an empirical fact. Śaṁkara posits an absolute distinction between Brahman and Māyā, knowledge and ignorance, transcendental and empirical. But this is hardly consistent with his own conception of Brahman as the sole Reality. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "If Brahman is the sole existence Māyā can be nothing but a power of Brahman, a force of his consciousness or a result of his being ; and if the Jivātman, one with Brahman is subject to its own Māyā, the Brahman in it is subject to Māyā[15]" Dvaita again, is not a solution, since it contradicts the integral experience of unity. Dwaitādvaitā is simply a statement of fact and not a solution of the enigma as to why that which has its essence in unity of the Absolute, is divided and subject to Ignorance, in its dynamic form.

Like Nāgārjuna, *Heideggar*, the contemporary German existen-

15. *Ibid.* p. 331.

tialist, rejects all possibilities of the knowledge of the why, since man only constitutes meanings and not natures. This, however, is not agnosticism, since Heideggar admits the possibility of the awareness of Nothing in Dread. He rightly maintains that individual cannot comprehend the Whole in its totality. But his, 'Nothing' remains a mere negative description of Reality. It is not the Śúnya, since it does not cancel Being, but is pure and featureless. Being, according to Heideggar, is neither brute existence nor intelligible world, neither the ground of existence nor God. It cannot be conceptualised. It is Nothing, the beginning and the end of all existence. Such a conception of Being, however, does not explain the rich multiplicity of the world. How does personal existence with all its variety, come to be originated in Nothing? What is the relation of man and Nothing? This is the fundamental problem of metaphysics, which Heideggar declares to be unknowable. Such an agnosticism, however, is unwarranted. 'Nothing' is a limit, a beyond, out of the ken of the phenomenological method adopted by Heideggar. Being is not only Nothing, but also everything, none but all, since"......out of absolute Nothingness, nothing can come, not even anything merely apparent, not even an illusion[16]; "Knowledge does not contradict ignorance, but grows through it, Granted with Heideggar, our age is post-theological and post-metaphysical, yet if it is an ascent or evolution, it must not annihilate these. Spiritualism must satisfy religion as well as Metaphysics.

As has already been pointed out, ignorance, according to Sri Aurobindo, is a separative knowledge, forgetful of the unity underlying the Many. Such an ignorance, obviously, cannot have its locus in Sachchidānanda who is integral and undivided whole. "Integral Brahman cannot be in its integrality the source of the Ignorance because its integrity is in its very nature all-consciousness.[17]" Hence, ignorance is neither original nor primal. Māyā, if it be an original power of the consciousness of the Eternal cannot itself be an ignorance, but must be a transcendent and universal power of self-knowledge and all-knowledge. Igno-

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16. Life Divi e Vol. II. Second Edition. p 333.
17. *Ibid.* p 350.

rance can only intervene as a minor and subsequent movement, partial and relative. Neither is ignorance the nature of multiplicity, since dualism is a characteristic only of the outer layer of mental and physical. The many in the integrality or in each self of the Many cannot be really ignorant of the one or of others. Thus, ignorance is neither the nature of One nor of Many since both are equally real. It is a product of the exclusive concentration at mental level.

Jean Paul Sartre, another prominent existentialist, rejects all possibilities of such a unity in multiplicity. Man aspires to be God but God, in principle, is a self-contradiction, since a real unity of Pour-Soi and En-Soi in some Pour-Soi-En-Soi is impossible. As Sartre puts it, "Each human presence in this world is at the same time the direct project of metamorphosing his own Pour-Soi into En-Soi-Pour-Soi and the project of appropriating the world as the totality of being in itself under the varieties of a fundamental quality. Every human presence in the world is a passion, in that it is a project to lose itself, in order to find being, and in the same act constitute the En-Soi which escapes contingency in being its own ground, the Ens Causa Sui which the religions call God. Thus, man's passion is the inverse of Christ's for man loses himself as man in order that God may be born. But the idea of God is contradictory and we lose ourselves in vain; man is a useless passion.[18]" Thus man, according to Sartre, is essentially temporal and aspires vainly for an absolute repose in timeless mode of being. In its emphasis on personal existence, existentialism often falls in solipsism, failing to explain the unity underlying multiplicity. According to Sartre, a direct knowledge of the otherself is impossible, since this could be possible only if consciousness could identify itself with the thing, but then there could no longer be consciousness nor the possibility of knowledge. It is because of the fundamental tenet that consciousness is always the consciousness of something and the rejection of the possibility of knowing through being. Thus, the subject can not know anything except its own objects. Hence the dilemma of solipsism, Sartre finds a

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18 "L' Etre et le Neant". p. 708.
Quoted in Six Existentialist Thinkers by H. J. Blackham, p. 142.

way out, by pointing out that I know the other as subject when he knows me as object. But how can an object know at all ? While I know that the other is knowing me as object, I remain a subject and then how can the other subject know me? Again, even this knowledge of other's knowing me as object is an inference based on my own experience, or at best a 'possibility'. The only possible solution of solipsism is the recognition of the unity underlying multiplicity. In the direct knowledge through identity the self knows the other self as subject. The soul can identify itself with other souls in a perfect waking, which observes and takes account of all distinctions and also exceeds them.

Thus the origin of ignorance should be sought in some self-absorbed concentration of Tapas of consciousness-force in action on a separate movement of the force. Mind builds a wall of separation which shuts out the consciousness in each form from awareness of its own total self, of other embodied consciousness and of universal being. The locus of ignorance is neither self nor God but Nature. Nor is it even the whole of nature but only a development from its original integrality. It neither arises in Sachchidānanda nor in Supermind but only in mind, for mind alone differentiates and forgets unity.

OUT OF THE SEVENFOLD IGNORANCE, TOWARDS THE SEVENFOLD KNOWLEDGE

Ignorance, according to Sri Aurobindo, is sevenfold. The first and the most fundamental is the Original Ignorance due to which we forget the true nature of Absolute and concentrate on either Being or Becoming as the sole reality. The second is the Cosmic Ignorance due to which we take Becoming to be the true nature of Cosmos and tend to forget Being working behind it. The third is the Egoistic Ignorance due to which we identify ego with the true self and forget our universal nature. The fourth, the temporal Ignorance leads us to imagine our present short span of life to be the whole thing, forgetting the immortal nature of self. Even this view is further narrowed due to Psychological Ignorance which makes us concentrate on the surface nature and forget the levels of consciousness below or above it. Besides, there is the Constitutional Ignorance due to which we forget our

whole integral being and think body, life or mind or any two of these to be the whole man. All these six types of Ignorance lead to the seventh, the Practical Ignorance which is responsible for our entire error, evil, falsehood and pain in this world. It leads to all types of frictions between individuals and societies.

Thus, to obtain integral knowledge, man must get rid of these seven types of ignorance. He must know the true nature of the Absolute, the cosmos, the self, the becomings of self, the nature of subconscient and superconscient levels, the complex nature of the integral being and finally, the real use of our thought, will and action. Thus integral knowledge necessarily leads to integration and transformation of the entire nature into the truth of Spirit[19].

TRUTH AND ERROR

Illumined by the integral knowledge, which perceives atonce the truth of unity and multiplicity, the mind sees things free from discords and organised in a harmonious whole. At the mental level, however, such an experience is not actual but ideal and so long as we remain confined to thought, coherence within whole remains a mere faith, though this faith is not contradicted by reason, since it is not infra-rational but supra-rational. As we transcend the mental level, faith becomes a certainty. The real coherence is not a mental system of ideas but an actual state of integral experience. Perhaps, at our mental level, we must admit the impossibility of realisation of such a state, yet the fact cannot be denied that as we progress in experience, we tend to realise it more and more. This integral experience of the whole is the criterion of all truth. It is the whole truth and every truth is true in that whole. Our judgements are erroneous only when we treat the particular in isolation of the whole. Every truth is certainly true in its own context but it is not the whole truth, not an absolute truth. The truth of our judgements is determined by their coherence in the Absolute Truth of integral experience. Now, before elaborating the theory advanced by Sri Aurobindo, let us first examine the consistency of some other prominent theories on this

19. Life Divine, Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 440-42.

problem. This would serve a two-fold purpose. Whereas it will exhibit the weakness of others it would also help us towards a better understanding of Sri Aurobindo's approach.

TRUTH AS ABSOLUTE EXPERIENCE

Truth, according to Bradley, consists in noncontradiction or coherence. Thought can give us only a partial view of reality. "Truth", as Bradley says, "must be conditional[20]". Hence no judgements are absolutely true. "Every truth is so true that in the end all truth is false.[21]" Absolute alone is true and all relative truths are false. But elsewhere, Bradley says, "There will be no truth which is entirely true, just as there will be no error which is entirely false[22]". Truth and error admit degrees. Here, clearly, Bradley depicts two distinct views of thought. On one side, he wants to maintain the reality of particulars, while at another place he rejects them as unreal. An explanation with reference to 'Somehow' does not solve the difficulty.

This theory, differs from the Syād Vāda of Jainism and has some direct advantages on the latter. Syādvāda rightly maintains that every human judgement, being based on a conditional view of the whole from its own perspective, is partially true. But the whole is not a mere formal synthesis of parts. In the famous analogy of the elephant and the blind-man used by Jains, it must be noted, that an elephant is not a mere togetherness of ears, trunk, feet, tail etc. but an integral whole, internally related with parts. To quote Joachim, it is a "form which through and through interpenetrates its materials[23]." The absolutists rightly maintain that truth is based on Absolute which is a dynamic whole and which alone is perfect truth, yet, without its basis in actual expcrience the theory tends to become abstract. Schiller aptly points out that it is purely ideal and hence not applicable to concrete facts. The alternative, however, is not the correspondence theory of truth or that of pragmatic value. Coherence is certainly the criterion of all truth, only that mental coherence must have its ground in integral experience which finds place for all types of experiences.

20. Appearancs and Reality p.479.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid* p. 320-1.
23. The Nature of Truth. p. 77.

TRUTH AS PRAGMATIC AND HUMAN

As opposed to the Absolutists, the Pragmatists do not use the word "truth" in the sense of reality but only as an adjective of knowledge that works in life. As Pierce asks, "Grant an idea or belief to be true, what concrete difference will its being true make in one actual life[24]?" The positivists and Humanists join hands with pragmatists, to emphasise the Protegorian dictum of "Homo Mensura". Man is the measure of all things. Truth is not an intrinsic or ontological value bnt essentially human. It is that which is true for us. As James puts it, "The truth of an idea is not a stagnant property inherent in it. Truth happens to an idea. It becomes true, is made true by events. Its verity is in fact an event, a process, namely of its verifying itself its verification. Its validity is the process of its validation[25]. "Thus not logical coherence but utility and human interpretation is the criterion of truth. Schiller tries to show that even the truths of mathematics are conditional. He points out, that some London squares are really circular. Thus there is nothing like Absolute truth. All truths are merely probable." "Ideas" as Dewey points out, "are not innate properties of mind corresponding to ultimate prior traits of Being, nor are they a prior-categories imposed on sense in a once for all way, prior to experience so as to make it possible.[26]" Truth is a value and a species of good. It has its genesis in utility. According to Schiller, "The truth is, of course, that the real coherence of thoughts and the only coherence that should be called 'logical' is the coherence created by their relevence to the interest and purposes of some thinker[27]."

Thus all truth is essentially related to man. But this does not prove that all truth is human and dependent on its utility. Beyond the pragmatic value of truth, there is an intrinsic value of it which constitutes its essence. [As Sri Aurobindo points out, "There is a self-law of Supreme Truth which is above all standards[28]." To be a man fully one must transcend man. Not man but superman is the goal of truth. The lower, to be complete,

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24. Pragmatism. p. 200.
25. *Ibid* p. 201.
26. The Quest for Certainty. p. 160.
27. Logica for Use. p. 139.
28. Life Divine. Vol. II Second Edition. p. 386.

must transcend to higher, in which alone it is completed. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "If we would know all, we must turn our gaze to that which is beyond all. That being known, all else is comrehended[29]."] Schiller maintains that a truth proper is only achieved by a verification of truth claim, though this truth again is a claim of another truth to be verified, since the process of verification is never final. As he says "We can define truth—(1) formally as logical value; (2) psychologically as satisfaction of a cognitive purpose, (3) materially as a truth claim that works and is useful, empirically as dependent on the consequences of taking it as true[30]." This truth is provisional, relative, progressive and empirical. It is phenomenal truth. But if we look into the criticisms of non-pragmatic theories of truth, as advanced by Schiller, we find a sort of confusion between phenomenal and philosophical truth. Phenomenal truth is certainly valuable for our work a day life. But Philosohoy seeks after a truth which is eternal, absolute and integral. Obviously, such a truth is not logical but spiritual. Its verification is integral experience.

TRUTH AS SUBJECTIVITY

Truth, according to Kierkegaard, is subjectivity. As he says, "........a philosophy of pure thought is for an existing individual a chimera, if the truth that is sought is something to exist in[31]." Thus the proper object of knowledge is individual's own existence. He is concerned with other objects only so far as they happen to come within his own subjective perview. In subjectivity, reflection is directed to the "nature of the individual relationship if only the mode of this relationship is in the truth the individual is in truth even if he should happen to be thus related to what is not true[32]." Thus strictly speaking man cannot know anything other than himself. For a man, as Kieregaard points out, "his own being is the first and final object of his thinking by which he is to judge of everything else[33]."

Taken in the e istentielist's sense, this view leads to solipsism.

29. Mother India. August 1952. p. 8]
30. Logic for use. p. 153.
31. Concluding Unscinstific post-Script. p. 275.
32. *Ibid.* p. 178.
33. *Ibid.* p. 179.

All direct knowledge of God and the world is denied. Our knowledge of the world is a mere possibility. The passion for God has no objective certainty. Kierkegaard rightly maintains that all knowledge is subjective.[34] But this subjective consciousness is one with world and God and can know them by a knowledge through identity. The theory of truth as subjectivity can avoid its difficulties by taking subject as the true self. Kierkegaard rightly emphasises more and more inwardness but he does not go to the depth where the real subject is one with the objects and the God. Knowledge is always the knowledge of myself but by a constant enlargement of the boundries, and finally, by a breaking of the subliminal, we know in it the cosmic as well as supracosmic. ["The truth behind it is that each man has to think for himself know for himself according to his capacity but his judgement can be valid only on condition that he is ready to learn and open always to a larger knowledge[35]."] Kierkegaard's conception of the passian for Infinite as a mere venture and not a finished event, is based on a limitation of knowledge by denial of the knowledge through identity. God is not an ideal conception but the supreme Reality, the essence of our own individuality, ["We know the Divine and become the Divine because we are That already in our secret nature[36]."] Kierkegaard rightly maintains that truth is not a matter of dialectics. It has to be lived and thereby radiated indirectly in a silent and enduring indirect communication. But to live is to experience and the deeper we experience, the more we live, and grow in truth. Hence the logical aim of life and culmination of experience is the Integral Absolute.[37]

TRUTH AS OBJECTIVITY

Against the theory of subjectivity as truth, the empiricists and positivists, materialists and realists hold objectivity as the crite-

34. "Indeed we have no means of knowing the objective world except by our subjective consciousness of which the physical senses themselves are instruments; as the world appears not only to that but in that so it is to us."
—*Sri Aurobindo Life Divine Vol. II. Second Edition.* p. 434.]

35. *Ibid.* p. 435.

36. *Sri Aurobindo.* The Synthesis of Yoga. p. 2.

37. "He is the person beyond all persons, the home and country of all souls, the Truth of which truths are only imperfect figures.
—*Letters of Sri Aurobindo, first Series.* p. 83.]

rion of truth. According to critical realism, the truth and error can be explained thus, "when we 'know' an object, we are assigning a certain "essence"—a character or group of characters —to some reality existing independently of the knowledge-process. And as truth is the identity of this essence with the actual character of this reality referred to, so error stands for the lack of such agreement, and the ascribing of an ideal character to what we are mistaken in supposing to be real, or the ascribing to a reality of a wrong character instead of a right one[38]."

As against the Absolutists, Critical Realists maintain that there can be a judgement about an aspect or part of reality apart from the whole system of it, and such judgement is wholly true or false according to its correspondence with the reality. But as Kant has finally shown, we cannot know, by our senses the object as it is and hence correspondence theory of truth is inadequate. Thus Russel's Philosophy of Sense-data ends in subjectivism. The theory of Truth as objectivity is a common sense stand point and has its strength in being so. As George Santayana argues, "you cannot prove realism to a complete sceptic or idealist; but you can show an honest man that he is not a complete sceptic or idealist; but a realist at heart. So long as he is alive his sincere philosophy must fulfil the assumptions of his life and not destroy them[39]." Philosophy, however, is not common sense. It should go deeper than the surface details of life and find its true Spiritual significance in Absolute.

TRUTH AS INTEGRAL EXPERIENCE

Truth according to Sri Aurobindo, is the integral experience of Sachchidānanda. It is the Absolute experience which includes and explains all other experiences. "The cosmic truth is the view of things of a cosmic consciousness in which things are seen in their true essence and their true relation to the Divine and to each other[40]." Every truth is a part of this cosmic truth. Each type of ignorance is derived from this cosmic ignorance. Every know-

38. The Essays on Critical Realism. p. 117-8.
39. *Ibid.* p. 183-84.
40. *Sri Aurobindo*—The Riddle of this world. p. 67.

ledge is part of this Absolute Knowledge[41]. Each particular truth is a truth in the whole. Taken apart from whole and separated from it, it is error, since ignorance is this separative knowledge. As Sri Aurobindo wrote in his letter to Dilip, "One has to look at things on all sides to see them steadily and whole. Once again, it is the forces working behind that I have to look at, I do'nt want to go bllnd among surface details[42]."

Coherence theory is true in emphasing on the consistency of the idea in the mental whole. Correspondence theory, on the other hand, is equally true to emphasise on the need of the reference of the idea to the fact, without which, mere coherence is no guarantee for truth. Ideas and facts must be correlated and to take either as complete truth is a partial view. The idea is the realisation of a truth in consciousness as the fact is its realisation in power. Both are equally indispensable, and justified in themselves and in each other. Neither has warranted to ignoring or despising its complement. Pragmatism truely emphasises on the practical worldly utility of truth and the significance of human interpretation of it. Idealism, on the other hand, is equally true in its emphasis on the reference of truth to ultimate good and spiritual value. In the words of Sri Aurobindo, "Man approaches nearer his perfection when he combines in himself the idealist and the pragmatist, the originative soul and the executive power[43]." Thus Knowledge is the integral experience of Reality and Truth is coherence in integral Knowledge.

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41. "When we have entered into the unknowable then all this other knowledge becomes valid. When we have sacrificed all forms into the formless, then all forms become at once negligible and infinitely precious."
Sri Aurobindo—Mother India, August 1952. p. 10.

42. *Among the Great—(D. K. Roy).* p. 315.

43. *Ideal and Progress.* p. 9.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

"The description of the status of knowledge to which we aspire determines the means of knowledge which we shall use."

—*Sri Aurobindo. Vide. Synthesis of Yoga.* p. 351.

Now, how can we acquire this integral knowledge and Truth? Philosophy is based on experience. The more integral the experience, the more profound is the Philosophy based upon it. The integral experience is the experience of our whole being and not any particular part of it. Hence a method to realise Reality in all its entirety is as much imperative as a sound logic to render it intelligible. The Philosopher not only thinks but also grows. Philosophy, as far as the Indian tradition goes, is not only an enquiry but also a realisation. The concepts are mere instruments to convey the experience to others. If they do not grow simultaneously with the widening of the horizon of experience, Philosophy falls short of its purpose of being universal. Mere logical consistency is no guarantee for ontological certainty. [As Sri Aurobindo says, "What the mind conceives must be need not be the measure of will be[1]."] But this does not, entitle us to neglect the importance of language and logic. [To quote Sri Aurobindo again, "A language has to be created which is atonce intuitively metaphyscial and revealingly poetical, admitting significant and living images as the vehicle of a close, suggestive and vivid indication.[2]"] Hence, the task before the philosopher is to develop a method for the realisation of Reality as well as an appropriate logic to explain the integral experience. [The clue to such a method is given by the nature of knowledge which we have already discussed. In the present chapter we shall evaluate the different philosophical methods and finally make an

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1. Letters of Sri Aurobindo on the Mother. p. 87.
2. Life Divine Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 43.

attempt to formulate a true method for Philosophy, in the light of Sri Aurobindo's thought.]

THE TRADITIONAL METHODS—MATHEMATICAL

Rationalism in Modern European Philosophy had its dawn in mathematical method. Descartes strongly emphasised that whereas the first principles are supplied by innate ideas the subsequent truths must be mathematically deduced from these and no sense-experience or imagination should be allowed to meddle with it. Spinoza begins from the definitions of the fundamental concepts, draws corollaries and geometrically deduces axioms and principles from the same. Leibniz, himself a mathematician, brought in many laws of mechanics to fulfil the gaps of his monadology but the experiment did not fare better.

It was so, since Philosophy is not a closed system of mathematical laws but an interpretation of facts and values based on actual experience. The identification of the relation of God and world with that of a theorem to its axiom, as critics have pointed out, is a grave confusion of cause and ratio. The laws of causality in metaphysics are different from that of syllogistic reasoning. With the method of the rationalists, Philosophy lost all its richness, dynamism and concreteness, and became rigid, abstract and static. Philosophy was made subservient to mathematics. The difference between the two was entirely missed.

But the *Empirical Method,* as suggested in contrast to that of rationalists, was equally one sided. Its logical conclusion was Hume's scepticism. Empirical generalisations, based on stray experiences, are mere probable hypotheses of science and not certain postulates of metaphysics.[3] Senses can only know through bits of experience which, however joined, can never give the original whole. Methods should correspond to the type of enquiry.

TRANSCENDENTAL METHOD

[The distinctive feature of Kant's Philosophy, in his own eye, was an enquiry into the conditions of knowledge. He enquires

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3. "So long as we confine ourselves to sense evidence and physical consciousness, we can conceive nothing and know nothing except the material world and its phenomena."

—*Sri Aurobindo. Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition.* p. 72.

into the origin and extent of knowledge, its sources and limits, the ground of its existence and legitimacy. To find out these transcendental conditions of knowledge, Kant employed a transcendental method. It is based on the analysis of the nature of sensibility and understanding. All our knowledge begins with the senses, proceeds thence to understanding, and ends with reason. In his transcendental analytic and dialectic, Kant finds out forms of sensibility and categories of understanding beyond which all is declared to be unknowable.]

[Now, these concepts may satisfy pure reason itself, but as Sri Aurobindo points out, "every concept is incomplete for us and to a part of our nature almost unreal unless it bocomes an experience[4]." Philosophy is both a criticism as well as realisation. The transcendental method, to be useful, must be supported by an immanent method as that of Bergson, ". ......the concepts of reason have no obligatory force. We must judge of existence not by what we mentally conceive but by what we see to exist[5]."] This Kant's method has its merit in showing the limits of reason and the irrepressible elements in metaphysics. But the limits of reason are not the limits of knowledge. "Kant argues in a metaphysical way that there can be no metaphysics[6]." He limits knowledge to mere sense and reason. But the fundamentals of Philosophy are neither articles of faith nor postulates of Ethics. Faith, unless it is based on realisation, does not provide any strong ground for Philosophy or Religion. Reason may give laws to phenomenal nature but not to the Reality itself. Reality does not depend upon the theory of knowledge. As Bergson says, "I see only one means of knowing how far I can go : that is by going[7]." The conclusions of transcendental analysis do not determine the nature of Reality. "Metaphysics" as W. T. Marvin says, "is logically prior to the theory of knowledge and that it is not peculiarly indebted to this science either for its problems or for their solutions[8]." Metaphysics has its basis in spiritual reali-

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4. Life Divine. Vol. I, Second Edition. p. 74.
5. *Ibid.* p. 92.
6. Falkenberg. History of Modern Philosophy. p. 340.
7. Mind Energy. p. 2.
8. The New Realism. p. 50.

sation, and reason, if it has to be of any worth, must faithfully interepret these experiences. Reason cannot explain the ultimate why but its duty to describe it is certainly imperative. Reality, grasped by any particular faculty of man, gives only one view of the picture. The alternative is not a bare combination of experiences of different faculties but an integral intuition which satisfies our whole being.

DIALECTICAL METHOD

Rationalism, which Kant's half-hearted moralism restrained only temporarily, became absolute in the "Logisierung" of Hegel. To Hegel all Being is thought realised and all becoming a development of thought. Thus, Nature is identified with Logic and dialectic becomes the method of Metaphysics. Both abstract reflective understanding and mystical intuition are rejected. It is pointed out that while the former shuts itself within the phenomena, the latter expects to gain the highest knowledge of Absolute by a sort of quick jump. The organ of true Philosphy, according to Hegel, is reason as the faculty of concrete concepts. [This concrete concept does not repel its contrary but self-mediates with it.] The Philosophy of reflexion of Kant and the intuitionism of Schelling are synthesised in the dialectic of Hegel. [Reason neither fixes the opposites nor denies them. The unity of opposites is neither impossible as it is in the transcendental method nor primordial as it is in the intuitionism of Schelling. Thought identifies the opposites through development. Thus Reality as well as Philosophy is a system of concepts, each of which passes over into its successor just as it has been generated by its predecessor. The nisus of the dialectic is inherent in contradiction which is immanent in it. The contradiction should be at once negated and conserved. This is realised by the movement of the concepts from thesis to antithesis, both together forming a synthesis, which as thesis again gives rise to antithesis and thus the process goes on till the Absolute Idea is reached.] But, Benedetto Croce raised a reasonable polemic in pointing to Hegel's abuse of the dialectical method by its illegitimate extension to the concepts which are not opposite but realy distinct. Thus religion is not the antithesis of art nor Philosophy a synthesis of both. Thought, whether concrete

or abstract, is only one poise of Reality and hence the identification of Logic and Nature is an unwarranted exaltation of part as whole. Any attempt to fit Reality into the rigid scheme of "bloodless ballot of categories" seeks to distort it and to render it steryle and monotonous. It is not the concept which fixes the nature of Reality but Reality which decides the nature of concept. The basic fallacy, underlying the dialectical method, in Philosophy, is to impose on Reality a scheme alien to it. In place of an endeavour to realise Reality, an attempt is done to force it in the predetermined pattern of thought movement. All the defects of intellectualism are implicitly inherent in such a method. To know the Absolute, we must first approach Him with our whole being and it is only after realisation that logic should enter to explain or describe it. Logic is based on metaphysics and metaphysics is based on experience. Hence, not logic but experience determines the nature of Reality.

METHOD OF LOGICAL ANALYSIS

The proper function of Philosophy, according to the Analytic School, namely, Logical Positivism, is to analyse, "the statements asserted by scientists,study their kinds and relations and analyse terms as components of those statements and theories as ordered systems of these statements[9]." "The Logic of Science," as Carnap calls the analysis of the linguistic expressions of Science, is divided into logical Syntax and Semantics. Logical Syntax analyses complex and compound sentences into simple ones and the simple sentences into their component words, and discovers the laws governing the combination of words into significant sentences. It enables us to realise the basic assertions of different sciences and their logical interrelations. Semantics considers the relations of linguistic expressions to objects designated by them. It reveals that two or more terms may be synonymous and that one expression is reducible to another on the grounds of identity of meaning. "The object of Philosophy," according to Wittgenstein, "is the logical clarification of thoughts. Philosophy is not, a doctrine but an activity. A Philosophical work consists essentially of elucidations. The result of Philosophy is not a number of "Philosophical propositions" but

9. Cornap, "Logical foundations of the Unity of Science," in Int. Ency. of Unified Science. Vol. I No. 1.

to make propositions clear.[10]" Thus, Logical positivsts assign to philosophy, the task of clarification, interpretation and coordination of the results of science, through logical analysis. This method of logical analysis is a very fruitful weapon in relieving metaphysics of many puzzles. But leaving the firm rock of experience it leads to mere abstractions. Language taken out of its experiencial context, concept shorn of all concrete content cannot present a true conception of concrete Reality. Once grant the method of logical position to be the only method and all metaphysics shall necessarily be meaningless. But Metaphysics is possible, not only as a Metaphysic of Nature or of Knowledge, but also as a Metaphysic of the thing-in-itself. The deprivation of Philosophy of all metaphysical quest is neither logical nor positive. Logical positivism's meaning of meaning is not clear. The field of experience has been unduly limited and the implications of verification remain ambiguous. ["In each case," as Sri Aurobindo points out, "understanding, discrimination, verification are necessary; but the subjective and the supraphysical must have another method of verification than that which we apply successfully to the physical and external objective."] The truths of Metaphysics, the knowledge of the integral truth can be verified only by integral experience through identity. Logical positivism excludes all that is beyond the intellect. The urge to know the ultimate Reality is as fundamental as that to know phenomena. Hence, any rejection of metaphysics is unpositivistic in the sense of being unscientific and illogical.

HISTORICAL METHOD

Hegel and Croce, identified Historical with Spiritual. According to Prof. Collingwood, "All Metaphysical questions are Historical questions[12]." Hegel and Croce followed dialectical method. Prof. Collingwood, on the other hand, employed a historical method. The purpose of Metaphysics, according to him, is to find out the presuppositions underlying the ordinary science[13]. The

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10. Tractatus Logic Politicus, 4. p. 112.
11. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 434.
12. An Essay on Metaphysics. p. 49.
13. "Metaphysics is the attempt to find out what absolute presuppositions have been made by this or that person or group of persons on this or that occasion or group of occasions, in the the course of this or that piece of thinking."
—*R. G. Collingwood. An Essay on Metaphysics.* p. 47.

method is the same as that of Science. [Thus, Metaphysical propositions are true only in their context. Every metaphysical statement is qualified by metaphysical rubric. Metaphysics describes the absolute presuppositions held by any branch of science in its various stages. As the histroy of science changes so the Metaphysics. Such a method however, deprives Metaphysics of all search after ultimate Truth. To identify Metaphysics with history, is to confuse the Absolute presuppositions with known hypotheses. It is a grave confusion of genesis and validity. The conclusions of transcendental method are entirely missed. Both logical positivists and Prof. Collingwood rightly emphasise that Metaphysics must be based on facts but they err in confining the arena of facts to science only[14]. Metaphysics systematises values as much as facts. The quest of absolute presuppositions is not very useful in Science or Philosophy. Philosophy, to be worthy of its name, must be a search after integral truth. To Glaucon who asked, "Who are the true philosophers?" Socrates replied: "Those who are lovers of the vision, of truth." The knowledge they love is of the sort, "which shows them the eternal nature not varying from generation and corruption.[15]"

ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS

The realists mainly emphasise on analysis and the idealists on synthesis. The Absolutists raised a severe polemic against the analytic method. Bradley writes, "......but the sensuous curtain is a deception and a cheat, if it hides some colour—less movement of atoms, some spectrol woof of impalpable abstractions, or unearthly ballet of blood-less categories. Though dragged to such conclusions, we cannot embrace them. Our principles may be true but they are not reality. They no more make that whole which commands our devotion, than some shredded dissection of human tatters is that warm and breathing beauty of flesh which our hearts find delightful.[16]" According to Bergson, "Philosophy

14. Philosophy, "is an attempt to fix the fundamental realities and principles of being as distinct from its processes and the phenomena which result from those processes."

—*Sri Aurobindo. Life Divine Vol. II Second Edition.* p. 456.

15. Republic. Book VIth. p. 485.

16. Logic p. 591.

can only be an effort to dissolve again into the whole.[17]" As against this view of Bradley and Bergson, E. G. Spaulding defends, "analysis as a method of knowing which discovers entitles or parts which are real in quite the same sense as are the wholes which are analysed.[18]" He distinguishes between formal (*i. e.* conceptual) and experimental (*i. e.* material) analysis and points out that whereas the latter actually distorts Reality the former does not. As a critic says against Bradley, "We may resolve movement as presented to us by intuition, into abstract elements but in that case, we must bear in mind that each of these elements is but a partial view, a limit which we ourselves had laid down in order to facilitate analysis and research and which does not correspond to any real division.[19]" But, both realists and idealists equally commit the same fallacy. To apply analysis as the sole weapon is as much unfruitful in Philosophy as to reject it down right. Experience without analysis and distinction is a blind plunge into a deep abyss. It comprehends Reality as a blurred whole and dead unity. Pure analysis, on the other hand, misses the unity underlying the fleeting and isolated bits of experience. The philosopher, besides realisation, has an equally imperative duty to conceptualise the experience. Whereas the former is only possible by an approach through the whole being, the latter necessarily involves analysis. It can be legitimately concluded with Spaulding that analysis cannot be condemned "wholesale" even though it may be rejected in some cases.

The realists, however, fail to understand the true implications of fundamental concepts of idealism. Pitkin's examples from experimental zoology and surgery, to refute the idealistic view of the universe as organic whole, are an instance of exploiting the difficulties of language to disprove the validity of spiritual experience. Genesis does not decide validity. The fallacies of expression are no argument against the validity of experience. But the idealists, on the other hand, have no warrant to reject all external relations, on the basis of spiritual experience of the world

17. Creative Evolution. p. 202.
18. The New Realism. p. 155.
19. S. Aliotta. Idealistic Reaction against Science. p. 107.

as organic whole, since the individual is not only real as a part of the Absolute but is itself a whole within the Supreme whole.

THE INTEGRAL APPROACH

THE ROLE OF REASON IN KNOWLEDGE

"All this labour of speculation," according to Sri Aurobindo, "has its utility in training the human mind and helping to keep before it the idea of something beyond and ultimate towards which it must turn. But the intellectual reason can only point vaguely or feel gropingly towards it or try to indicate partial and even conflicting aspects of its manifestation here, it cannot enter into it and know it.[20]" The reason cannot arrive at any finality in its conclusions because it can neither go to the root nor grasp the whole. Nor can it supply dynamic force to life. Thought, however free it may be from sense error, desire, old association and intellectual prejudices, only becomes effective when it is accompanied by vision, experience and realisation. Not logic but a higher intuition alone can be the judge of the value of lower intuitions. It is certain that ultimately, logic and experience must be harmonised. But, to attain that harmony, it is the logic which should be dynemic, it is the mind which should submit. As Sri Aurobindo says, "Logic after all is only a measured dance of the mind, nothing else.[21]"

The defects of the intellect are of course too many to enumerate *e. g.* its leaning towards doubt, its arrogance to judge supra-rational, its attempt to explain supra-physical by physical and finally its demand of the physical proof of the higher and spiritual. But these and other defects are inherent only in ordinary unenlightened intellect which is not guided by realisation. Just as the characteristic defects of uncontrolled and unregenerated vital is no argument against the value of vital itself, so also failures of reason do not authorise us to condemn reason as such. The seeker after integral truth, of course, must be on his guard against mistaking the mental suggestions and intellectual conclusions for realisation. Again, the restlessness of the mind,

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20. The Riddle of this World. p. 24.
21. Letters of Sri Aurobindo. IInd Series. p. 298.

which disturbs the spontaneous activity of the psychic principle and retards the descent of the true illuminating knowledge or else deforms it as soon as or even before it fully touches the human mind, must be controlled by strenuous efforts. "But", as Sri Aurobindo points out, "if the intellect is surrendered, open, quiet, receptive, there is no reason why it should not be a means of reception of the light or an aid to the experience of spiritual states and to the fulness of an inner change.[22]" If light can be received through vital, emotional or physical, there is no reason why it should not be so through thinking mind. The only thing required, is to make it an ally to realisation. The mind should be trained and enlightened to receive the higher truth. Besides its downward and outward action, the reason has also an upward and inward eye and a more luminous functioning which help it to grasp divinations from hidden eternities. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "The intellect is not capable by itself of bringing us into touch with the concrete Spiritual Reality, but it can help by a mental formulation of the truth of the Spirit which explains it to the mind and can be applied even in the more direct seeking—this help is of capital importance.[23]" It is rather unfortunate that the secret truths, when translated into intellectual concepts, become disparate and conflicting ideals. We have all the difficulties in trying to bring them into any kind of harmony since the efforts of our life advance by a sort of experimental and empirical seeking. But as the reason progresses vertically and horizontically, the inner and outer life advances in widht and depth. New possibilities of self-knowledge and self-realisation are opened and the awakening into spiritual consciousness becomes more certain. It prepares a sort of base for spiritual regeneration. According to Sri Aurobindo, "Reason is not the supreme light and yet it is always a necessary light-bringer and unless it has been given its rights and allowed to judge and purify our first infra-rational instincts, impluses, rash favours, crude beliefs and blind pre-judgements, we are not altogether ready for the full unveiling of a greater inner illumining.[24]"

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22. Lights on Yoga. p. 37.
23. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 713.
24. Evolution. p. 29.

THE LOGIC OF INFINITE

"What is magic to our finite reason is the logic of the infinite[25]." The ultimate Reality cannot be deduced or induced by a reasoning which proceeds from a consideration of the elements of name and form and makes that its standard. An ignorant half-knowledge cannot follow the motions of an All knowledge[26]." As the things become more and more complex, as the chain of evolution rises, the process becomes more indeterminable. As the order of reality changes so the conceptions, measures and standards applicable to it. The laws of physical world do not apply to non-physical. The laws of life are inadequate to explain human mind. Again, the finite cannot explain the Infinite, the divisible, the Indivisible. Our standards of logic may be suitable in their own sphere but when applied to other phenomena they are inadequate. Reason finds it difficult to deal with infra-rational or supra-rational. The Indeterminable determines itself as infinite and finite. The immutable admits a constant mutability and endless differences. The self has a nature and yet other than its nature. The One becomes an innumerable multitude and the Impersonal creates or supports the personality and is itself a person. Being turns into becoming and yet it is always itself and other than its becomings. The individual universalises itself and the universal individualises itself. Brahman is at once void of qualities and capable of infinite qualities, the Lord and Doer of works and yet a non-doer and a silent witness of the workings of nature. All these judgements contradict each other.

But, does it mean that the ways of Infinite are illogical? "To understand truly the world-process of the Infinite and the time-process of the Eternal," as Sri Aurobindo points out, "the consciousness must pass beyond this finite reason and the finite sense to a larger reason and spiritual sense in touch with the consciousness of the infinite and responsive to the logic of the infinite which is the very logic of being itself and arises inevitably from its self-operation of its own realities, a logic whose sequences

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25. Life Divine. Vol. II, Second Edition. p. 42.
26. *Ibid.* p. 40.

are not the steps of thought, but the steps of existence[27]." The Infinitesmial and Infinite are indeterminate but not irrational magical feats. Every order of reality has its own logic peculiar to it. There is a logic in the ways of Infinite since there are connections and relations infallibly seen and executed. But it is a spritual or supramental reason. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "It is a greater reason, a greater logic because it is more vast, subtle, complex in its operations: it comprehends all the data which our observation fails to seize, it deduces from them results which neither our deduction nor induction can anticipate, because our conclusions and inferences have a meagre foundation and are fallible and brittle.[28]" The logic of Infinite contradicts our finite reason because it comprehends the unlimited, the whole and the essence, while our finite logic is more or less confined to part, the limited and the superficial names and forms.

In his book on "Philosophical Method", Prof. Collingwood has done a great service to Philosophy by trying to change the traditional logic to make it applicable to philosophical subjects. If there is a deductive logic adequate to meet the needs of empirical sciences, and if there are phases of the deductive logic combined together with induction to meet the demands of social sciences, then there should also be a logic of Philosophy to meet its demand. But, Collingwood fails to arrive at a true logic of Philosophy due to his historical and intellectual bias. Philosophy is not merely an unusually persistent effort to think systematically, as William James said, but it is also primarily and universally, a persistent effort to know Reality. The logic of Philosophy must be based on integral knowledge of Reality. Logic should change to cope with new experiences. New laws and new categories are required to explain new facts. While two plus two is equal to four, infinity plus infinity is equal to infinity. According to Gita, "It stands undivided in things an yet as if divided.[29] In the mathematics of Infinite, there is an underlying unity in all divisions and diversities. The Upanisad says, "this is the

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27. Life Divine. Vol. II, Second Edition. p. 220.
28. Life Divine. Vol. II, Second Edition. p. 42.
29. Gita.

complete and That is the complete; subtract the complete from the complete and complete is remainder."

पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णं मुदच्यते ।

पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवा वशिष्यते ॥[30]

The Infinite is real in its essentiality, commonality and individuality. The One and the Many are fundamental aspects of the Absolute. There is a diversity and richness in unity. All this is perfectly logical. As Sri Aurobindo puts it, " .... If needed there were only a rigid monotone of limited oneness and sameness, there would be no place for reason and logic, for logic consists in the right perception of relations: the highest work of reason is to find the one substance, the one law, the cementing latent reality connecting and unifying the many, the discordant and disparate[31]."

According to the fundamental tenet of the adwaita Vedānta, the Reality is One, Impersonal, Indeterminate, unmanifest, non-relational, all pervading, motionless and without parts. Hence the Many, the personal, determinate, manifest, relational, changing, and that which belongs to parts, is unreal, false and non-existing in the ultimate sense. As Śaṁkara argues against Syādvāda, the same thing cannot be predicated in various ways at the same time (नैकस्मिन्न संभवात्). Since the Supernature and Nature differ in their characters, they cannot be affirmed of the same Reality. The Absolute is indeterminate, and cannot be described. As Spinoza said, "Determination est Negatio." But if nothing can be affirmed of Absolute, Metaphysics is impossible. To the finite mind the determinability of Indeterminate appears to be a paradox. "But", as Sri Aurobindo points out, "the cotradiction disappears when we understand that the indeterminability is not in its true sense negative, not an imposition of incapacity on the Infinite, but positive, a freedom within itself from limitation by its own determinations and necessarily a freedom from all external determination by anything not itself, since there is no real possibi-

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30. Brihadaranyaka Upanisad. I. 4. 10.
31. Life Divine. Vol. II, Second Edition. p. 56.

lity of such a not self coming into existence[32]." The road to divine is not only through via-negative. The Upanisads apply to Infinite both a negative logic of Neti Neti as well as a positive logic of Iti Iti. All affirmations are assertions of status or activity in the Absolute. All negations are assertion of its freedom both from and in that status or activity. A mere negative approach results in nihilism or scepticism. A predicate applied to Absolute does not negate the possibility of its opposite, since every predicate applied to Infinite is a 'logical monad' which is windowless. The Infinite is perfect in all its poise. Absolute is all and none at the same time. There is no negation in Absolute, since it is a negation of negations, a 'denial of denial', as Eckhart puts it.

Bradley wavers between the two views; whatever is, must belong to Reality and that Absolute is beyond all relations. The two tendencies contradictory as they are, merely represent two poise of reality[33] which Bradley calls the vision from 'the side of us'; and vision from 'the side of universe'. Seeing that the experience here cannot be explained with reference to the law of contradiction which he amply used in his Book first of 'Appearance and Reality', Bradley, in his description of Absolute, takes recourse to irrational 'somehow'. Critics rightly ask that if 'somehow', is valid in the case of Absolute then why not with reference to Appearance as well. An argument from faith or revelation cannot be a valid argument in Metaphysics, since Metaphysics is ontologically and not logically related to revelation. A realisation, to find its place in Metaphysics, must have its logical reason. The impotency of finite logic to explain the ways of Infinite is no argument to reject all Metaphysics as 'finding of bad reasons', neither does it authorise us to declare the ways of Infinite as irrational or justified on mere faith. Only logic can break logic. Where our logic fails, we must appeal to the logic of Infinite. As Sri Aurobindo points out, "The consciousness of infinite Existence is other than our mind-consciousness and sense-consciousness,

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32. *Ibid.* p 46.

33. All affirmations are denied only to lead to a wider affirmation of the same Reality. All antinomies confront each other in order to recognise one Truth in their opposed aspects and embrace by the way of conflict their mutual unity."

—*Sri Aurobindo. Life Divine. Vol. I Second Edition.* p. 41.

greater and more capacious, for it includes them as minor terms of its workings and the logic of Infinite Existence is other than our intellectual logic. It reconciles in its great primal facts of being what to our mental view, concerned as it is with words and ideas derived from secondary facts, are irreconcilable contraries[34]." To explain the ways of Absolute in Metaphysics, we need not appeal to faith but to the logic of Infinite. Bradley truly saw that in the case of Absolute contradictory becomes contrary[35]. We wish to add that since these contraries do not exist unreconciled in Absolute, the ways of Infinite are perfectly logical. As Sri Aurobindo points out, "What our mind sees as contraries may be to the infinite consciousness not contraries but complementaries[36]."

As the standard of Reality changes so the concepts to describe its experience. The interpretations of spiritual experience in terms of the generic concepts of Science or relational concepts of mathematics are inadequate by the very nature of the case[37]. The logic of Infinite has its own concepts based on spiritual experience. Sri Aurobindo has developed a number of such concepts such as subconscient, intraconscient, Overmind, Supermind, intuitive mind and illumined mind, etc. As the philosopher progresses in his experience he should constantly improve new concepts to explain it. As he dives deeper in his experience so also the concepts grow and mature into richer meanings and wider contents.

INTUITIVE METHOD

"The Spiritual seeing of God and world," as Sri Aurobindo points out, "is not ideative only, not even mainly or primarily ideative. It is direct experience and as real, vivid, near, constant, effective, intimate as to the mind its sensuous seeing and feeling of images, objects and persons[38]." The subject can only be known subjectively. The ultimate Reality can only be grasped in a sort of

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34. *Ibid.* p. 101.
35. R. W. Church. Bradley's diolectic. p. 24.
36. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 219.
37. "A law founded upon an observation of what is divided in Space and Time cannot be confidently applied to the being and action of the indivisible; not only it cannot be applied to the spaceless and timeless Infinite, but it cannot be applied even to a Time Infinte or a Space Infinite."
—*Sri Anrobindo. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition.* p. 41.
38. Essays on Gita. Second Series. p. 134.

intuitive knowledge through direct contact. Even if sometimes subordinated to reason, intuition has always been recommended as one of the valid sources of knowledge in Philosophy, but its true nature is missed more than often. The early empiricists identified intuition with sense-experience. Croce defined intuition as sensation in the form of mental imagery. It was Bradley, who for the first time in the west, recognised the nature of intuition as experience as a whole. He rejected the empiricistic notion of intuition as an indirect knowledge of the bits of experience attained through sense organs. For Bradley as for Spinoza, intuition is a grasp of Reality as a concrete system not only in its universal aspect but in its unique singularity and individuality. In immediate experience, according to Bradley, "What we discover rather is a whole in which distinction can be made but in which divisions do not exist[39]." Thus intuition is cxperience as a whole. [According to Sri Aurobindo, "........ the highest intuitive knowledge sees thing in the whole, in the large and details only as sides of the indivisible whole, its tendency is towards immediate synthesis and the Unity of Knowledge[40]."]

Intuition, according to Śaṁkara, is 'the knower's Knowledge' (द्रष्टु, द्रष्टिः). It is the final result of enquiry into Brahman and the object of enquiry is an accomplished substance[41]. It is not activity but knowledge as such[42]. It is one, undifferentiated homogeneous mass whose content, if we may so call it, is 'attributeless attributed.' As Bradley says, "I am driven to the conclusion that for me experience is the same as reality[43]." In the supreme timeless status, where consciousness is one with Being, there is no operation of knowledge. It is not an act of knowledge nor observation but an intrinsic awareness that self is all and all is self. This is the spontaneous consciousness of the Spirit which is everything and all. [As Sri Aurobindo puts it, "......all this awareness exists intrinsically, self evidently, automatically, with-

39. Appearance and Reality. p. 128.
40. Life Divine Vol. I. IInd Edition. p. 84.
41. अनुभवावसान त्वा द्भूत वस्तु विषय त्वाच्च ब्रह्म ज्ञान स्य S. B. I. i. 2.
42. नतु ज्ञानं नाम मानसी क्रिया S. B. I. i. 4.
43. Appearance and Reality. p. 12.

out the need of any act, regard or operation of knowledge ; for knowledge here is not an act, but a state, pure, perpetual and inherent[44]."]

According to Sri Aurobindo, there are four methods of cognition in nature ; a knowledge by identity, a knowledge by intimate direct contact, a knowledge by separative direct contact, a wholly separative knowledge by indirect contact. A knowledge by identity is the knowledge by direct awareness of our own essential existence[45]. It is the knowledge of self devoid of any other content. The knowledge of objects, on the other hand, is wholly separative and based on indirect contact. This kind of knowledge can tell us nothing unless it is aided by the intuition of the sense-mind, the vital and the perceptive mind together with the intervention of reason. To arrive at an integral knowledge the limited finite should become a boundless finite and an Infinite. The knowledge through indirect contact must be supported with a knowledge by intimate direct contact culminating into a knowledge by identity like the Keval jnāna of Jainism. To know the world truly, we must first know the self, for, as Sri Aurobindo points out, "......consciousness is one in the subject and object[46]."

The integral knowledge is a triune realisation of all in self, self in all and self becoming all ; inclusion, indwelling and identity. This knowledge is possible when the subliminal breaks its boundaries and becomes one with cosmic consciousness. As our surface nature is separated from universal nature by body, so by a more transparent fence, the subliminal is separated from the cosmic through the mental, vital and subtle-physical sheaths. The subliminal, however, has an enveloping circumconscient by which it receives the contact of the world and can become aware of them. This circumconscient can be widened indefiinitely till it can unite and identify itself with cosmic being, feel itself universal, one with all existence. It is then, that the existence of a cosmic Being becomes a certitude. But in the subliminal we get only

44. Life Divine. Vol. II. IInd Edition. p. 305
45. "To know is to identify, to overcome otherness."
—*G. Gvniile. The Theory of Mind Pure as Act.* p. 13.
46. Life Divine. Vol. II. IInd Edition. p. 299.

the greater knowledge and not the complete and original, which resides only in superconscient ranges.

Intuition is a power of consciousness near and more intimate to the knowledge by identity. It, however, is likely to be misinterpreted and mixed with other mental elements. There are various types of intuitions proper to different levels, vital, physical and mental. Bergson's intuition is typical of vital level.[47] Even the inconscient matter works through an intuition proper to itself. At every stage of evolution this intuition supports and enforces the immediate necessities of the creative force, by assuming a working proper to that stage. Even at the mental stage the intellect is always guided by a sort of intuition called faith. "[Intuition, therefore," says Sri Aurobindo, "is present at the beginning of things and in their middle as well as at their consummation.[48]"]

Bradley draws a significant distinction between infra-rational and supra-rational immediacy. In the infra-rational immediacy according to him, "we have the experience of a whole. This whole contains diversity and on the other hand, is not parted by relations." Such an experience, Bradley points out, "serves to suggest to us the general idea of a total experience where will and thought and feeling may all once more be one.[49]" Thus the higher immediacy is a mere hypothesis based on the experience of lower immediacy. Bradley here confuses two different types of intuitions which have nothing in common except an overt resemblance. The spiritual intuition is an intuition quite different from mental, vital or physical. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "Spiritual intuition is always a more luminous guide than the discriminating reason, and spiritual intuition addresses itself to us not only through reason, but through the rest of our being as well, through the heart and life also.[50]" The mental, vital or physical intuitions may be scrutinised by reason, but the spiritual intuition is beyond its ken. In a certain sense, the former

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47. "By intuition I mean instinct that becomes disinterested, self-conscious, capable of reflecting upon its object and enlarging it indefinitely."

—*Bergson. Creative Evolution.* p. 186.

48. Letters of Sri Aurobindo Ist Series p. 5.
49. Appearance and Reality. IInd Edition. p. 141.
50. The Synthesis of Yoga. p. 660.

cannot be called intuitton since they can only have the authority of the reason, for which there is no inner source of direct certitude.

Intuition is pure at supra-mental level but in its descent through mental, vital and physical, it becomes mixed and distorted. When our conscionsness again ascends to the supra-mental level, we get this original and native intuition where reason can only observe and register, since an intuition can be completed or judged only by another higher intuition. [Intuition has four-fold potencies, viz., a power of revelatory truth seeing, a power of inspiration, a power of truth—touch and a power of true and automatic discrimination of the exact relation of truth to truth.] Such an intuition does not stand in need of the help of intellect since it can itself perform all the actions of reason. It is beyond the distinctions of knower, known and knowledge. It is spiritual intuition.

THE INTEGRAL METHOD OF SRI AUROBINDO

["Our ways of knowing," says Sri Aurobindo, "must be appropriate to that which is to be known[51]."] Methods must change to the nature of knowledge. A physical method, based on the testimony of senses, will necessarily stumble at the overt aspects of the things and cannot give an inner view of Reality. The subject can only be known subjectively. The attempt to know it as an object is both a logical and psychological impossibility. A mathematical method will tell us only about the mental relations and the ontological status of Reality. A phenomenological method is valid only in the field of phenomena. A transcendental method will arrive only at the *a priori* forms of intuition and categories of understanding. A dialectical method would give us the process of mental movement. A direct intuitive method alone can give a direct view of Reality[52].

But Reason and intuition mutually negate only in the field of ignorance. In knowledge, on the other hand, they include and affirm each other. As Bergson says, "Dialectic is necessary to put

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51. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 43.

52. "If the means of knowledge are indirect and imperfect, the knowledge attained will also be indirect and imperfect."

—*Sri Aurobindo. Life Divine. Vol. I.* p. 258.

intuition to the proof, necessary also in order that intuition should break itself up into concepts and so be propagated to other men.[53]" So long as the senses, the external impressions and the analytic method dominate reason, it is a denial of intuition and a bar to spiritual experience. But purified, sublimated and illumined, it conceptualises the supra-conceptual and universalises the spiritual experience. [Reason was the helper, reason is the bar, and reason again becomes a helper.]

According to Sri Aurobindo, "To see things steadily and see them whole is not possible to the mind, but it is the very nature of the transcendent supermind.[54]" A supramental gnostic vision of ultimate Reality, a Spiritual intuition, however, satisfies Reason, intuition as well as experience, since the Reality must satisfy our whole being. The history of Philosophy is replete with conflicts between various faculties of man, claiming for superiority, to explain all the enigmas of metaphysics. Reason, will, vital, intuition, emotion and perception, all have at a time or other tried to solve all the puzzles but only gave impetus to reaction in favour of others. Thus Philosophy passed from Rationalism to Empiricism, Volunaticism and mysticism, etc. A synoptic view of dialectical movement of the spirit, welding all these component parts in its unified march, is the only solution which can bring us to some real advance in the solution of the metaphysical problems. A Philosophy based on a logical treatment of the experience of our whole being, is the only Philosophy worthy of its name. Such a Philosophy can only be arrived by an integral method. The basic fallacy underlying the conflicting views in Philosophy is the exclusive emphasis on a particular type of experience. A spiritual intuition, on the other hand, explains all intuitions. [According to Sri Aurobindo, "As in Science so in Metaphysical thought, that general and ultimate solution is likely to be the best which includes and accounts for all so that each truth of experience takes its place in the whole[55]."] A consummating experience which eliminates the lesser ones, or like that of Śaṁkara, transcends the lower

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53. Creative Evolution. p. 251.
54. Life Divine. Vol. I p. 163.
55. Life Divine. Vol II. Second Edition. p. 211.

experiences has its own validity in Philosophy. But to know the Reality integrally, an integral experience is needed, which does not negate but affirm, does not reject, but transform even the lowest type of experience. [Such is the spiritual intuition. As Sri Aurobindo says. "The spiritual intuition lays hold always upon the reality, it is the luminous harbinger of the spiritual realisation or else its illuminative light ; it sees that which the other powers of our being are labouring to explore; it gets at the firm truth of the abstract representations of the heart and life, a truth which is itself neither remotely abstract nor outwardly concrete, but something else for which these are only two sides of its psychological manifestation to us[56]."] Spiritual intuition does not negate the experience gained through physical, vital or mental instruments. Whereas the latter seek to abstract one particular type of experience from the otheres, spiritual intuition embraces the whole. It is a knowledge through whole being. [It is a direct vision, an authentic seeing, a comprehensive intuitive apprehension.]

But the method par-excellence is the integral yoga. To Sri Aurobindo, there is no difference in knowing and being. Hence, to know the Divine, the philosopher must become the Divine. "For", as Sri Aurobindo points out, "our means and ways of knowledge and action must necessarily be according to the nature of our consciousness and it is the consciousness that must radically change if we are to command and not only be occasionally visited by that higher power of knowledge[57]." Intellectual knowledge is wholly separative one. Intuition is only a fragmentary glimpse. The yogic knowledge or gnosis starts from Truth, knows it directly and hence its truth is self-evident and absolute. Memory, imagination, observation, comparison, contrast, analogy and reasoning and other instruments of mental knowledge turn into direct intuitive truth-aspiration of totality in Gnosis. Sri Aurobindo's philosophy itself is a reasoned intellectual interpretation of his experience through integral yoga. It is in yoga alone that the spiritual intuition manifests in its fulness and the integral knowledge is attained. Yogic knowledge is the authentic knowledge of the Divine. The details of yoga,how-

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56. The Synthesis of Yoga p. 663.
57. The Synthesis of Yoga. p. 562.

ever, we have discussed in the last chapter. Yoga is both the method as well as the culmination of all Philosophy. Will must follow knowledge. Philosophy must lead to yoga, though yoga does not necessarily presuppose philosophy. It is not an exaggeration to say that an integral yoga is a necessary pre-requisite to an integral philosophy which is based on integral experience. In a sense, all theories of ultimate Reality are based on some sort of yoga or union with Divine and the more perfect the union the more perfect the experience and so also the Philosophy based upon it. If Philosophy is not to be confined to epistemology, it must be based on a knowledge attained through whole being. Sri Aurobindo's integral yoga is such a device. It is more than mysticism since in mysticism there is no integration. In it the mystic state is made a normal state of the whole being.

Thus Sri Aurobindo's integral method in Philosophy consists of logic of Infinite and Spiritual Intuition, both based on integral yoga. It covertly includes all the methods discussed so far, finds their limits and subordinates them to yoga. Evidently, it is not a rigid process. It has ample scope for individual variations peculiar to the particular stage and capacity of the seeker concerned. It is a dynamic, all embracing, and ever developing method, characteristic of the Knowledge which it seeks. This leads to a catholic approach in Philosophy. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "Firmness without dogmatism in our system, toleration without weakness, of all other systems should therefore be our intellectual outlook[58]." This is the foundation of the integral Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, which we shall now discuss in sequence.

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58. The Advent. Vol. XI. No. 2. p. 22.

CHAPTER IV

ABSOLUTE AND GOD

"He is the Brahman, consciously Supports and Originates all from his higher Spiritual Nature, consciously here becomes all things in a nature of Intelligence, Mind, Life and Sense and objective phenomenon of material existence. The Jiva is he in that Spiritual Nature of the eternal, His eternal multiplicity, His self vision from many centres of conscious self power. God, Nature and Jiva are the three terms of existence, and these three are One Being."

—*Sri Aurobindo. Essays on the Gita, IInd Series* p. 57.

THE URGE TO ABSOLUTE

The infinite diversity of man's knowledge can be summed up in three principal categories; self, world and God. To know either of these, the knowledge of other two is equally imperative. Thus consciously or unconsciously, man seeks for a unity of this trinity. Thought cannot rest unless it reaches the whole. Philosophy is an attempt to arrive at an integral truth, sufficient to explain all the diversities. A **"Welt-an-Shauung"** which integrates world, self and God, without abstraction or distortion, can alone satisfy our whole being; a necessary condition for the individual satisfaction of each part, intellectual, vital or physical. The self, of which the man is most immediately conscious, always strives for self-sufficiency and yet this is not possible without his unity with world and God. Impelled by the instinctive urge of the senses, man persistently tries to know the world and yet it cannot be known perfectly unless he knows his own self and God. Again, as the knowledge progresses, man becomes more conscious of the ultimate Reality God, without whose knowledge, the knowledge of the self as well as the world remains incomplete.

Man has approached this unity both positively and negatively. This led him to distort or deny either, two or all of these categories. Subjectivism, Materialism, Pantheism exalt self, world

and God respectively and negate the other two. Nihilism seeks to unify all in a fathomless void, by an absolute negation of all ; an attempt to solve the problem by showing that it is no problem at all.

These solutions are inadequate by the very nature of the case. A true unity cannot be arrived by distortion or suppression of either aspect. Both the individual and the cosmos, need an Absolute, an ultimate truth of things in whose unity all are affirmed and integrated and nothing left or lost. Thus to reach the unity, man must arrive at a Supreme, to which all aspire, or an All without which nothing can exist.

But such an Absolute cannot be affirmed by a negation of the world and individual since it would leave them unexplained and thus fail to satisfy our whole being. Such an Absolute is not absolute since it leaves much out of its ken. This, however, does not mean that. It exists by virtue of the universe or self. Absolute is self sufficient, yet these are inseparable from Him since to know Him, the knowledge of the self and world is eqally necessary. It is only when man approaches the Absolute through the world that he becomes truly one with Him, possessing Him in him and the universe. Men passes from egotism to altruism and from both to spiritualism. Man and Nature are united in and with God.[1]

Human mind may find it difficult to believe how Absolute can be immanent and tanscendent, universal and individual, one and many at the same time. But this is purely intellectual difficulty. In the matters of Absolute on the other hand, not mental logic but integral experience is the ultimate criterion. To explain the paradox of the nature of Absolute, Śaṁkara is contented to call it indescribable. Bradley takes resort to irrational 'somehow'. Leibniz appeals to the law of pre-established harmony. But it cannot be explained without reference to the integral experience of the Divine consciousness, to the logic of Infinite itself. Buddha and Kant avoided explanation. Nāgārjuna and Bradley accepted agnosticism. But reason has no reason

1. "For that which all our mind-knowledge and sense-knowledge and supra-sensuous vision is seeking, is found most integrally in the unity of God and man and Nature and all that is in Nature."

—*Sri Aurobindo. Life Divine. Vol. II. IInd Edition.* p. 497.

to declare agnosticism as our ultimate destiny. There are instruments other than reason which give us a direct experience of the Divine. The knowledge of the Absolute leads to a complete self-knowledge, complete world-knowledge and complete God-knowledge. By a conscious unity of God, self and world in Absolute man knows the Consciousness-Force underlying all. This, however, is not a unity ab-extra. God is the Absolute, the essential unity of self and world, which transcends both.

DUALISM OF ARISTOTLE

Like Sāṁkhya, Aristotle posits a dualism between Supracosmic, and cosmic, form and matter, conscious and unconscious, potential and actual. Like Purusha, the Prime-Mover is free from all material elements, without parts, a conscious and pure spirit. But unlike Sāṁkhya, Aristotle was wise enough to see that such a Being can only be one, though with Rāmānuja he believes in spirits as mediators between God and matter. The movement of all things is nothing but the imitation of the first mover. Again, like Śaṁkhya, Aristotle does not accept the Platonic idea of God as the creator and governor of the universe. Such an idea is inconsistent with His blessedness. God is the perfect wisdom, the never ceasing cause of all the beauty and order of the universe though we cannot speak of Him as dynamic. The Prime Mover is static like the motionless Being of Parmenides.

Such a conception of perfection as essentially without movement, however, is based on the logic of things. God, on the other hand, is perfect yet dynamic since the imposition of any impossibility is to limit Him. While Spinoza identifies God with world, Aristotle believes in their original duality. We learn in 'Metaphysics', that all movement being from possibility to actuality, existing beyond the outermost starry sphere is God. God is the formal and not the material cause of the universe.

Motion, however, implies relation and relation presupposes a common ground, a whole as Bradley pointed out, in which the relates meet together. An uncompromising dualism cannot account for relation or change and hence renders all creation impossible. A deistic conception of God neither serves in Philoso-

phy nor in religion. Dualism, to be consistent, must be a Dualism in the whole. It must culminate in unity. Like the Purusha and Prakrti of Sāṁkhya, Aristosle's God and matter requires a third principle which is immanent in both and yet transcends them. Spinoza denies qualities to God; Aristotle assigns to Him unity, spirituality, self-consciousness and happinss. Spinoza's God is universal, Aristotle's God is individual. Prime Mover's thought is the "thought of thought". His happiness consists in the unchangeable self-contemplation. He acts upon the world by his mere existence. Such a conception of God, however, smacks too much of anthropomorphism. Both Deism and Pantheism are equally true and untrue since God is immanent as well as transcendent. The Absolute is neither an individual nor Pantheos, neither Saguṇa nor Nirguṇa, neither personal nor impersonal.

NON-DUALISM OF ŚAṀKARA

Śaṁkara advances two proofs for the existence of Absolute, the etymological and the psychological. The word Brahman is derived from the root, Bṛh which signifies excellence[2]. This undefined excellence permits of Brahman, the attribution of eternality, purity, intelligence etc. Again, Śaṁkara proves Brahman by an argument which Deussen calls "Psychological". He argues, "And, because of being the self of all, the existence of Brahman is well-known[3]." Brahman is immutable, all pervading, eternal, without change, without parts, self-luminous and beyond time and space. It is devoid of anything of a like kind or of a different kind and has no internal variety. (सजातीय विजातीय स्वगत भेद रहितम्) It is the wholly other but not non-being. (वाङ मनसा तीत त्वंना भावाभि प्रायम्). It is without qualities (Nirguṇa). Brahmanissat since it is not asat; chit since it is not achit, ānand since it is not of the nature of pain. It does not unfold, develop, express, manifest, grow or change, for it is self-identical. It is uniform in nature and devoid of the nature of the world. (निष्प्रपञ्च सदात्म कत्वम्) Thus like Spinoza's substance, Śaṁkara's Brahman is

2. वृद्धि कर्मा हि वृहति रनि शायने वर्तते ॥ Bhamati. I. i. 1.
3. सर्वस्या त्मत्वाच्च ब्रह्मास्तित्व प्रसिद्धि : ॥ S. B. I. i. 1.

unmanifest and indeterminate. The Absolute cannot be limited or defined by any one determination nor by a sum of determinations. Now, in the sense of being indeterminable, Absolute can be truly described by such negatives as the immobile immutable self, the eternal without qualities, the pure featureless one Existence and the Impersonal etc. But, on the other hand, He is equally the essence and source of all determination. According to Rāmānuja, Brahman is the Eternal with infinite qualities, the One who is the Many, the infinite person who is the source and foundation of all personalities, the lord of creation, the word, the master of all works. These positives fairly correspond to those negatives. Again, Brahman has internal difference and is a synthetic whole with souls and matter as its moments. The qualities-Being, Consciousness and Bliss give to Brahman a character and personality. He is omnipresent, omiscients, omnipotent, supreme personality.

Thus Rāmānuja's description of Brahman is in a marked contrast with that of Śaṁkara. But both are equally one sided and exalt one poise of the Absolute, as the sole reality. The upnisads, the source of advaita and visiṣṭādvaita, describe the Absolute by Iti Iti as well as by Neti Neti. The Integral Brahman is Unknowable and yet known, indeterminate and yet determined, saguṇa as well as nirguṇa, immanent and transcendent, personal and impersonal.

PANLOGISM OF HEGEL

Absolute, according to Hegel, is the spirit or Thought and Logic and Nature are its two abstraction. Thought does not first exist as logic and then as Nature and finally in its completed form as spirit. It exists only as spirit, which is the one res-completa from which logic and nature are alike abstractions. God is the creator of the world. As spirit, He is, "essentially the revelation of Himself. Without the world God would not be God. The terms used are intended to convey the impression that the life of the world is included within the process of the Absolute self-consciousness. God is not a spirit beyond the stars. He is spirit in all the spirits.

Hegel improved upon the formal logic of Kant by abolishing the dualism between sense and understanding but in the absense of a basis in integral experience his Absolute seems to be a mere logical construction. It does satisfy the theoretic demand but not the whole being. Logical concepts are certainly not mere empty forms and intellectual constructions may correspond to Reality, but in the matters of Absolute all logic, formal or concrete, is equally impotent, without its basis in experience. The Absolute Philosophy of Hegel is arrived by an identifiication of the logic of Infinite with finite logic. The Divine thought, if we may so speak of it, is identified wiih our own thought and the Absolute is a mere expression of the human achievements in different spheres. Without any basis in experience, the dialectic is not an evolution of God but of man's thought about Him. However concrete may be the "**Denkbestimmnng**", it seems more than often, that it is no better than "**Gedanken.**" Philosophy cannot avoid 'Thought', but to know the Absolute, logic must be subordinated to experience.

Hegel defines God as Absolute Reality, whatever that Reality turns out to be. All the categories, the whole system of Logic consititute the content of the Absolute Idea. And yet the "**auf-gehoben**" is a mere intellectual hypothesis. To question the existence of such a God as this, is impossible, for to deny it would mean the denial of all reality. But the same reasons which make the existence of such a God quite certain, also make it quite doubtful since they tell us nothing about Him. It is hence that following Hegelian concept of Absoulte as a community of selves, McTaggart lands in atheism. It seems clear from the 'Philosophy of Religion,' that the truth of God's nature according to Hegel, is to be found in the kingdom of Holy Ghost and that appears to be not a person but community. Such a God fails to satisfy religion as well as Philosophy since the Absoulte of Philosophy must unify man, world and God, the individuality, commonality and essentiality, while religion seeks a personal God to hold communion with. Inspite of Hegel's merit of infusing a living movement in the dead forms of categories, the Absolute Idea remains in fair contrast with the Real as realised in experience through identity. If logical activity consists in seeking for

a system of thought-forms which would give us the "soul" of the universe it must be based neither on sense nor understading nor both but on an integral experience of Absolute. The identification of thought and spirit smacks too much of block-universe. The claim to arrive at an Absolute Philosophy falls short of the true philosophic spirit.

ABSOLUTE AS SENTIENT EXPERIENCE

Bradley reaches the Absoulte by a contrast with the finite things. The very denial of reality to appearances implies that the Reality should be free from the limitations of the appearence. "Ultimate reality is such that it does not contradict itself[4]", says Bradley. The Absolute is self consistent. Again, the Absolute is one since there cannot be many reals free from conflict. The Absolute embraces, "all differences in an inclusive harmony." Hence, "the real is individual[5]." In this respect it can also be called, "a concrete universal,[6]" *i. e.* a universal which includes all the diversities of concrete existents within itself. Bradley further points out that, "reality is sentient experience[7]." According to him, in such an experience we do not find fragments, but, "what we discover rather is a whole in which distinctions can be made but in which divisions do not exist[8]." Bradley's Absolute must satisfy not only thought or intellect but the whole being since he maintains that to satisfy intellect fully, metaphysics must, "take account of all sides of our being[9]." Thus Absolute is, "a balance of pleasure[10]." He is also perfectly good[11]. Finally, the Absolute is neither a self-conscious spirit nor a person, self-hood and personality are marks of finitude. As Bradley puts it, "Assuredly the Absolute is not merely personal. It is not personal because it is personal and more. It is in a word superpersonal[12]."

4. Appearance and Reality. p. 120.
5. Ibid. p. 125.
6. Ibid. p. 407.
7. Ibid. p. 127.
8. Ibid. p. 128.
9. Ibid. p. 130.
10. Ibid. p. 405.
11. Ibid. p. 433.
12. Ibid. p. 471.

While reducing everything to relations and then to mere appearances, Bradley is instinctively conscious of their reality in some Absolute whole. Thus Absolute is reached by a contrast with appearances. But the demand of logical consistancy is not valid in the case of Absolute since Absolute is supra-rational. The logic of Absolute is different from the logic of appearances. Bradley admits that in Absolute the contradictories are reduced to contraries or complementaries but then it is difficult to understand that in what sense, logical consistency is demanded ? Bradley rightly perceived that the law of non-contradiction is not applicable to the Absolute and hence he explained It by instinctive faith, the argument from, "somehow". He, however, misses the 'how' since the whole method is artificial and does not proceed from experience. Bradley's Absolute experience is a mere hypothesis based on lower immediacy. By his conception of the Absolute as sentient experience, he even Identifies the two widely different types of experiences — the sentient and the spiritual. Again, Bradley rightly takes the Absolute to include all the diversities of concrete existents but the equally important poise of Absolute as unmanifest — and transcendent, has not been duly emphasised. The integral Absolute is one and many; individual and universal; immanent and transcendent, personal as well as impersonal. Bradley's Absolute satisfies neither intellect nor other parts of the being.

ABSOLUTE AND PERSONALITY

The Absolute according to Śaṁkara, is impersonal. The determinate Brahman regarded as supreme personality he calls Īśvar. Īsvar is all-comprehensive and contains everything within Himself. Brahman is beyond subject and subject, simple and self-subsistent, when it is taken as subject dealing with object, the principle of being in the world, it is known as Īśvar. Īśvar is self-conscious personality. Absolute is pure-consciousness. But since all creation is a mere phenomena, Īśvar is also a phenomenal truth, with Rāmānuja and Hegel, Śaṁkara accepts that not-self is an integral part of personality. Thus Īśvar is not timeless like Brahman but admits change and time. Īśvar has form while Brahman is formless.

Such a sharp distinction between Absolute and Īśvar, is however, far from being justified. If Absolute is the sole reality, neither subject nor object can be outside it. Self consciousness is but another state of pure consciousness. The determinate Īśvara is the determination of the indeterminate Brahman. To explain the experience of change, time and creation, Śaṁkara brings in the Creator, the personal God. But since the Absolute is conceived as changeless, indeterminate, timeless and impersonal, both God and world are declared mere phenomena. Thus Śaṁkara's non-dualism fails to bridge the gulf between the dualism of Brahman and Īśvara, Nirguna and Saguna, formless and formed, impersonal and personal, indeterminate and determinate. The Absolute, on the other hand, must not leave any thing out of its ken. Every ultimate dualism is based on purely intellectual ways of knowing.

Personality is generally held as a limitation due to certain specific qualities, forms, powers etc. It is in this sense, that Bradley denies personality to Absolute. The personality is a unified whole of multiple characters. Such a view forgets the essential person, who assumes various personalities and yet ramains one, real and eternal. The higher predicates assigned to Absolute are also the more comprehensive and hence do not negate the lower ones. The Absolute is super personal, not because it is not personal but because it is personal as well as impersonal.

The personalists and the theists, on the other hand, take personality in a different sense. According to Rāmānuja, in the ultimate Reality, called God, we have determination, limitation, difference, other being, which is at the same time dissolved contained and gathered together in the one. Finitude is in the infinite itself. Brahman has internal differences and is other than souls and matter which are its moments. The qualities of Being, consciousness and Bliss give to Brahman, a character and a personality, Brahman is omniscient and knows all through direct intuition. Personality implies power to plan and to realise it. God is a perfect person since He is self-dependent and self-differentiated. Such a view is in complete contrast with that of the Impersonal Absolute of Śaṁkara though it is precisely on the same grounds

that both attribute personality to God, the only difference being that while for Śaṁkara God is phenomenal, for Rāmānuja, He is absolutely real. God is the support, the director, the principal. Both Rāmānuja and Śaṁkara believe in a logic of identity but for Rāmānuja identity means inseparable existence (अप्रथक सिद्धि) Identity does not deny distinction. Rāmānuja's view however, has no place for mystic experience which is equally real. Any view, "falls short of the whole truth if it denies the essential unity of God and soul or their capacity for utter oneness or ignores what under-lies the supreme experience of the merger of the soul in the Divine Unity through love, through union of consciousness, through fusion of existence in existence[13]."

The theism of Rāmānuja has its great merit in finding a due place for moral, religious and aesthetic values. It bridges the gulf between thought and reality, phenomena and Noumena, and yet leaves a chasm between the personal and the impersonal. The refutation of the Impersonal Absolute, on the ground of its non-comprehension by perception and inference is unjustified, since the transcendent is self evident and only given in immediate experience. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "The Divine Being Sachchidānanda is atonce impersonal and personal ; it is an Existence and the origin and foundation of all truths, forces, powers, existences, but it is also the one transcendent conscious Being and the All Person of whom all conscious beings are the selves and personalities ; for He is their highest self and the universal indwelling Presence[14]."

THE CONCEPT OF GOD

According to Bradley, "If you identify the Absolute with God, that is not the God of religion. If again you separate them, God becomes a finite factor in the whole.[15]" Man cannot worship an impersonal indeterminate. Religious sentiment craves for a personal God to hold communion with. Both Śaṁkara and Bradley rightly distinguish between the Absolute and God. What, however, they fail to note is that these are merely two distinct

13. Life Divine, Vol. II, Second Edition. p. 451.
14. Life Divine, Vol. II, Second Edition. p. 450.
15. Appearance and Reality, p. 395.

poise of the same reality. Religion and Philosophy, as the upanisadic seers realised, seek the same ultimate reality through different ways.

The God must be not only the highest in the hierarchy of realities, the monas monadum, the *primus inter pares,* but also the all-inclusive. The pluralists reduce God to a mere finite Individual, infinitely better than ourselves. To Prof. Howison, God is a divine centre of the selves which are ontologically real and exist together with God. Rashdall differentiates between the Absolute and God and conceives the latter as finite and limited by other selves. Reality is thus a "community of persons" or in Dr. McTaggart's phrase "a society". Rashdall's definition of God as 'one of the selves' is on a par with the Nyāya-conception of God who is an individual. The God of Naiyāyiks is a personal being possessing existenee (Sat), knowledge (Chit) and bliss (Ānanda). As against the God of Śaṁkara the Nyāya-God is extra-Cosmic and not the material cause of the universe. Śaṁkara proves the futility of all arguments, including the inferencc of Nyāya to prove the existence of God and bases it on the testimony of Śruti. Kant restricts reason to make room for faith but faith, to have any ontological efficacy, must be based on realisation of which Śruti is a record. God is individual as well as universal, immanent and yet transcendent, personal and yet Infinite.

Thus, logically speaking, Śaṁkara's conception of God is more consistent than that of Nyāya but being an empirical postulate, it fares no better. Descarte's causal argument, whatever may be its logical consistency, reveals a salient point about the nature of God. If the universe is not a creation of the fiat of an irresponsible God, if we are not made of the stuff of dreams, the innate ideas or the first principles must correspond to reality. As Alexander points out, "ultimately in all cases it is our mental responses to objects that discover the objects to us as objects of cognition.[16]" The truth of the first principles is a necessary postulate of Philosophy. Bradley rightly perceives that religion is an effort to realise the reality through every aspect of our being and that philosophy

16. Space, Time and Deity. Vol. II, p. 380.

satisfies the intellect. But if the intellect cannot be fully satisfied unless the other parts of our being are given their due, how can Philosophy be satisfied of an Absolute who does not satisfy the religious sentiment? As intellect supplies the clue for the Absolute, religious experience determines the nature of God, but the two must be harmonised to arrive at an integral view of Reality which satisfies both Philosophy as well as Religion.

Alexander advances a peculiar conception of God as an ideal, non-existent Deity. "The world in its infinity tends towards infinite deity or is pregnant with it but that infinite deity does not exist.[17]" "God is not actual but ideal", only the nisus is actual. According to Alexander, "God of the religious consciousness is an actual infinite, the whole universe, with a nisus to deity.[18]" Such a conception of God is plainly riddled with empirical and materialistic bias. Alexander's God is always ideal and when actualised it is no more a God, since then the nisus is towards the deity of the deity. Such a God, however, can not satisfy us. Being is the least category that we can assign to anything. The ontological argument of Anslem significantly points out that to be God, God must exist. The argument from lower evolutes cannot explain the affairs of man since man is not a resultant but an emergent product. In man the nature becomes self-conscious. Man is not the only rational being but he is also the only religious being and hence the God of religion cannot be a mere resultant of the physical Space-time.

Like Alexander, Bergson also conceives God as a developing Being. Underlying matter and consciousness, there is one Principle that contains in itself two tendencics. Bergson calls it consciousness as "pure willing," the pure impulse from which our narrowed consciousness and perception of matter emerge. This principle of pure activity is the source and centre of all creation in the universe. Hence Bergson calls it God. As he says, "God thus defined has nothing of the already made; He is unceasing life, action, freedom[19]." God is the vital principle, the Elan Vital, dynamic and living

17. Ibid. p. 365. 18. Ibid. p. 362. 19. Creative Evolution, p. 262.

But energy presupposes Being. All phenomena, as Kant points out, is based on Noumena . The Elan-Vital of Bergson and the motionless Being of Parmenides are two poise of the same Reality. The will and impulse must be the will and impulse of some Being. God is Being as well as Becoming. As Sri Aurobindo poin's out, "The very coception of movement carries with it the potentiality of repose and betrays itself as an activity of some existence; the very idea of energy in action carries with it the idea of energy abstaining from action, and an absolute energy not in action is simply and purely absolute existence[20]."

Whitehead explains the nature of God in two senses; primordial and consequent, the source as well as the end of the universe. God is the creator, the sustainer as well as the destroyer of the world. The world, not only emanates from Him, but, also returns to Him. Whitehead believes that the evolution of the world is the evolution of God. The world also lives eternally and changelessly in His immediate experience. In the religious sense, as White-head interprets it,God thus immortalises or saves the world from destruction. But, again, as he says,"Neither God nor the world reaches a static completion. Both are in the grip of ultimate metaphysical ground, the creative advance into novelty. Either of them, God and the world is the instrument of novelty for the other[21]." Thus God is not Absolute. Both God and the world are subordinated to the principle of creativity. God is finite and determined.

As an actual entity experiencing the world, Whitehead's God is a person and subject with an aim and purpose to realise. Again, God is a kind companion to save man from ruin since He takes up every actual entity in His experience. He is "the poet of the world" since the creation of the world is the outcome of His vision of the possibilities. He is the inward directing and controlling force behind all ereation. He is "the principle of concretion." "All harmony, order and progressive continuity of the world is due to Him. "He is the binding element of the world."

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20. Life Divine, Vol. I. Second Edition. p. 91.
21. Process and Reality. p. 493-4.

God is immanent as well as transcendent. He is prior to the world, the primordial actual entity. The primordial and consequent conceptions of God resemble the Prakṛitic and Purusha of Śaṁkhya with the only difference that Whitehead bridges the gulf between the two by positing them as the two states of God. And yet the evolution of the world together with that of God, exhibits a lingering dualism in Whitehead's Philosophy. Distinctions of manifestation do not abolish the law of continuity. All divisions of the ontological Reality are merely epistemological devices. Conceptual bifurcation does not affect the unity of experience. The terms world, and God, One and Many, involution and evolution, manifest and unmanifest are simply our intellectual ways of understanding the simultaneous poise of the Sachchidānanda, in a serial order. He remained unchanged in change, timeless in time. Whitehead asserts that the process is the Reality and that we cannot legitimately ask the 'what' of the process since modern physics has proved that the ultimate constituent of matter is dynamic energy[22]. But the failures of science do not lead to despair of metaphysics. Science can not go beyond energy and hence proclaims motion to be the ultimate Reality but neither logic nor integral experience justifies such a conclusion. Motion presupposes Mover. Energy prespupposes Being. The exaltation of force as the ultimate Reality, as Science does, is only one side of the picture.

THE INTEGRAL APPROACH OF SRI AUROBINDO

The above discussion leads us to conclude with Sri Aurobindo that "All theories that make the Becoming sufficient to itself are therefore half truths, valid for some knowledge of the manifestation acquired by an exclusive concentration upon what they affirm and envisage, but otherwise valid only because the Being is not separate from the Becoming but present in it, constitutive of it, inherent in its every infinit-simal atom and in its boundless expansion and extension[23]." The theories of Reality as change have their truth in the fact of Becoming but even to know this truth com-

22. Process and Reality. p. 31.
23. Life Divine, Vol. II, Second Edition. p. 446.

pletely, the knowledge of Being is equally necessary. The Absolute is a supracosmic Reality, Being, Existence, Consciousness, Delight, Sachchidānanda but at the same time it is also the cosmic Reality, the Becoming. In the words of Sri Aurobindo, "The Being is One but this oneness is infinite and contains in itself an infinite plurality or multiplicity of itself; the One is the All; it is not only an essential existence but an All-Existence[24]."

With upanisads, Sri Aurobindo takes Sachchidānanda to be the ultimate Reality. The Absolue is Sachchidânanda Existence, consciousness and bliss. But again, according to Sri Aurobindo, "Sachchidānanda is the One with a triple aspect. In the Supreme, the three are not three but one-existence is consciousness, consciousness is bliss, and they are thus inseparable, not only inseparable but so much each other that they are not distinct at all[25]." Again, Brahman is Ātman, Purusha and Īśvara. These terms grew from a root of intuition. They have a comprehensive preciseness and are capable of a plastic application which avoids both vagueness and rigid intellectualism. Brahman is the Absolute which embraces all relativities. He is the inner self of all. He is the One in the Many, the conscious in unconscious. He is the cause as well as effect and the law of causality. He is space and all that is in space. He is the subject as well as the object, the thinker and the thought. "All realities and all aspects and all semblences are the Brahman; Brahman is the Absolute, the transcendent and incommunicable, the Supracosmic Existence that sustains the cosmos, the Cosmic Self that upholds all beings, but it is too the self of each individual : the soul or psychic entity is an eternal portion of the Īśvara ; it is his supreme Nature or consciousness Force that has become the living being in the world of living beings[26]."

Thus, according to Sri Aurobindo, the Divine has three aspects[27]:—

1. It is the Cosmic self and Spirit, that is in and behind all

24. Ibid. p. 448.
25. Lights on Yoga. p. 35.
26. Life Divine. Vol. II, IInd Edition. p. 36.
27. Vide, letters of Sri Aurobindo, Ist Series. p. 82.

things and beings, from which and in which all is manifested in the universe although at present in Ignorance.

2. It is the Spirit and Master of our own being within us.

3. It is the transcendent Being and Spirit, all bliss, light, knowledge and power.

Para Brahman is indescribable and inconceivable. As Sri Aurobindo says, "It is not Being or Non-Being but something of which Being and Non-Being are primary symbols; not Ātman or un-Ātman or Māyā ; not personality or Impersonality ; not quality or Non-quality ; not consciousness or non-consciousness ; not bliss or Non-Bliss ; not purusha or prakriti ; not God nor man nor animal, not release nor bondage ; but something of which all these are primary or derivative, general or particular symbols." But he hastens to add, "Still, when we say Para-Brahman is not this or that, we mean that It cannot in its essentiality be limited to this or that symbol or any sum of symbols; in a sense Parbrahman is all this and all this is Parbrahman[28]."

The ultimate of Philosophy and the Summum Bonum of religion, according to Sri Aurobindo, are merely two aspects of the same One Reality. Thus, God is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. "Omnipresent, for all forms are forms of His conscious being created by its force of movement in its own extension as Space and Time; omniscient, for all things exist in His conscious-being, are formed by it and possessed by it; omnipotent, for this all possessing conciousness is also an all possessing Force and all-informing will.[29]" God is immanent and transcendent, individual and universal, the creator, the preserver, the destroyer of everything. He is the helper, the guide, the beloved and the All lover. He is separate and yet one with all beings. Outside of Him exists nothing. God is determinate, free, perfect, eternal and the self of all. He is Being as well as Becoming. The evolution of the world is the manifestation of His multiple aspects. He is the efficient and the material, the first and the final cause of the world. He is the last in the chain of perfection and yet all inclusive. He is subject

28. The Advent. Vol. XI, No. 2. p. 21.
29. Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition. p. 175.

as well as object. He is the object of devotion, love and mystic union. He is endowed with such qualities as veracity, grace, knowledge and bliss. He is free from pain, evil, suffering, ignorance limitation etc. He is self-conscious supreme Person. He is the matrix, the nisus as well as the goal of evolution. As creator, God is Supermind. This aspect, however, we shall take up in Chapter VI.

Sri Aurobindo calls God, Para Purusha and Absolute, the Para Brahman. While the former is manifest, the latter is unmanifest, though ultimately the two are One. As Sri Aurobindo says, "God or Para Purusha is Para Brahman unmanifest and inexpressible, turned towards a certain kind of manifestation or expression, of which the two eternal terms are Ātman and Jagati, Self and Universe.[30]" The manifestation is the deployment of the unmanifest; the form is the form of the formless. Para Brahman himself becomes Para Purusha.

Now here, it appears that God and Absolute have not been clearly distinguished. To say that God is Para Brahman turned towards a certain kind of manifestation, is to assert that God is not Absolute since Absolute as Sri Aurobindo further points out, is manifest as well as unmanifest. When God is only the manifested aspect of Para Brahman, and not identical with it, how can it be said that "God being Para Brahman is himself the Absolute.[31]"? The manifested aspect of Reality certainly, does not exhaust the whole of it. Again, if God is himself the Absolute, then we should assert that a certain part of it is also unknowable. Such sort of difficulties, however, can be solved only on the basis of the logic of the Infinite. The knowledge of Absolute and God is not a matter of mind but of consciousness and hence intellect cannot give laws to it. In the field of Infinite, Philosophy has the pious duty to faithfully describe the facts of experience. It is for the convenience of mental understanding that a distinction is made between Absolute and God, Para Brahman and Para-Purusha. But while dealing with the concepts we must not forget their experiential context.

30. The Advent. Vol. XI. No. 2. p. 22.
31. Ibid.

Sri Aurobindo has taken every care to analyse the experience and to form distinct concepts for different experiences but still he always warns us not to take them too rigidly but to use them as dynamic instruments to understand the ever growing experience of Truth.

Sri Aurobindo has not reached Parabrahman by dialectical method. The only way to know the Absolute is the ever deepening, ever widening, ever enlarging spiritual experience. A sound Philosophy of Absolute must be a Philosophy of affirmation since Absolute is all and all is in Absolute. Every intuition, however, partial it may be, has its own truth and hence no Philosophy based on any intuitive experience can be rejected down right[32]. The only dispute is with those who deny the truth of other views and claim to hold Infinite in their finite grip. According to Sri Aurobindo, "Advaita is true, because the Many are only manifestations of the One, Visistadvaita is true because ideas are eternal and having manifested, must have manifested before and will manifest again the Many are eternal in the One, only they are sometimes manifest and sometimes unmanifest. Ádvaita is true because although from one point of view One and the Many are eternally and essentially the same, yet from another, the idea in its manifestation is eternally different from the Intelligence in which it manifests[33]." A true Philosophy of Absolute must find place for all other Philosophies. As in Science so in Philosophy, the better theory is the more comprehensive one, that which explains the other as well as transcends them.

Sri Aurobindo is neither a dogmatist nor a sceptic. Para Brahman, according to him is neither fully known nor absolutely unknowable. As we rise in our experienee, we know him more and more. It is hence that to build a system in Philosophy is unphilosophical. Like Croce, Bergson, Whitehead and others, Sri Aurobindo leaves the knowledge free and developing and does not confine it to a closed and rigid system. He is not a system-builder but a seer,

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32. "We must state what we see as best as we can, but need not dispute what others see or state ; rather we must accept and in our own system locate and account for what they have seen and stated."
—*Sri Aurobindo. The Advent. Vol. XI, No. 2.* p. 21.

33. The Ideal of Karmayogin. p. 54-55.

always trying for more and more integral experience and ever rigilent to observe, examine, compare, improve and even change[34]. A catholicity of approach and a spirit of toleration is the marked characteristic of Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy. His is a dynamic approach, always growing in knowledge, but never claiming to reach the Absolute in its totality. In Philosophy it is the search and sincerity, the patience and strenuous effort to travel the path which counts more than the claim to absolute knowledge. A true philosopher is a lover of wisdom and never a sole possessor of it.

34. In one of his talks noted by Anil Baran Roy, Sri Aurobindo said, "At a certain stage of my sadhana I experienced all intellectual truths to be false. Then I came to know that they were incomplete truths. Now, I am in a position to put these truths in their proper place. I have written many things before which I must reject or revise now:.......".

—*Vide Mother India. August 1952.* p. 4.

CHAPTER V

SELF AND INDIVIDUALITY

"All that is He, and He is the more than all that is, and we ourselves, though we know it not, are being of His Being, force of His force, conscious with a consicousness derived from Him or His; even our mortal existence is made out of His substance and there is an immortal within us that is a spark of light and bliss that are for ever."—*Sri Aurobindo.*

The Synthesis of Yoga. Ist University Edition. p. 279.

So far, we have dealt with Absolute as unity and One. Now, let us examine the aspect of Many, the multiplicity since that too is equally important. Inspite of its being most intuitively certain and near to us, the nature of self has been the most difficult to grasp. Some know it as the body, others as life, while still others as mind. Many identify ego with the self, others know it as a focus imaginarious behind five sheaths. Similarly, there is much difference of views as to whether the self is static or dynamic, particular or universal, real individual or merely a shadow of the Absolute. Thus, the problem of individual is closely knit with that of self. Many accept the self but do not assign it any individuality. Others maintain the reality of the individual without positing any permanent self behind his individuality. Reality of the individual is a necessary postulate of ethics and religion. Any rejection of individual is a rejection of ethics as well as religion. Such a Philosophy has no place for the philosopher himself and thus becomes inconceivable. Such a view, by the very inherent dialectic of thought, passes into its opposite. In contrast to the Absolutists, the Personalists and the Theists join hands with the Pluralists to maintain the identity of the indiscernibles, sometimes even at the cost of missing the universal. Thus the nature of self and individuality has been explored from various points of view *viz.*, epistemological, metaphysical, psychological, ethical and religious etc. A truly integral Philosophy

must take account of all these standpoints. It is in this context that we wish to proceed in the present chapter.

THE CHANGE THEORY OF SELF

Many philosophers have conceived the self as a changing series or a fleeting quality of soul—substance. Hume and James, the thinkers of Nyāya—Vaiśeṣika, Buddhists and Rāmānuja together with Bradley do not believe in the existence of an eternal consciousness without change. Knowledge, according to Rāmānuja, is not eternal since had it been so it should also appear like that but we find the perceptual knowledge as a temporal event[1]. The followers of Kaṇāda accept the view that the consciousness is adventitious, for if the soul were an eternal intelligence it would remain intelligent even in the state of deep sleep and trance[2]. Again the self according to James is a stream of consciousness, in which the moments are sympathetially attached to one another and pass their content to the succeeding moment. Thus the consciousness passes its perception of the object A to the succeeding consciousness C' who in its turn is conscious of the object A'. Thus both the stages A and A' are presented to C' resulting in an awareness of change. There is no permanent self beyond the passing thought. The passing thought is the only thinker.

EPISTEMOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF SELF

Such a theory, however, tends to forget the epistemological significance of Self. A synthetic *a-priori* unity of apperception, as Kant called the self, which may unite the stray experiences categorised in understanding and received in bits through forms of intuition, is a necessary presupposition of all knowledge. All consciousness of change pre-supposes something beyond change. A stream of consciousness cannot itself be conscious of a series of changing moments. According to James, even when a man recovers from a fit of unconsciousness, he feels no gap

1. नित्यम चेत् संवेदनय स्वत : सिद्धय, नित्य, मित्यैव प्रतीत्येत न च तथा प्रतीत्येत—Sri Bhasya.
2. Samkar's testimony : S. B. II. p. 18.

separating the state just before the fit and just after it. These two states are felt as continuous, the gap being only inferred from objective signs showing lapse of time[3]. But, it is difficult to understand as to how the experience of Peter and Paul before sleep is transferred to their consciousness after sleep, inspite of such a long gap. Such a phenomenon can be explained only on the presupposition of the presence of a permanent self. All development is development to consciousness. Self is the eternal subject in relation to which any subject-object or inter-object relation is intelligible. It is beyond all categories since as Kant points out, it is the source of all categories. It is of the nature of eternal presence.

PANLOGISM OF T. H. GREEN

"The unification of the manifold in the world" according to T. H. Green, "implies the presence of the manifold to a mind for which and through the action of which it is a related whole." This is the universal or Absolute mind. Our consciousness is only a "limited mode" of "world consciousness." Both the individual minds as well as the things in themselves are mere modes of the Absolute. Green admits two principles in man, the spiritual principle of eternal changeless consciousness and the natural principle, of which the successive changing feelings or sense impressions are the products. But both alike are conceived as mere fictitious modes of the universal mind. The entire universe is constituted of abstract relations and there is no place for free individuals. This reduction of the world and individual to a system of mere abstract relations is the panlogism of Green against which S. Aliotta rightly remarks, "There is something in the psychic fact as immediately experienced which no effort of dialectic can ever identify with a system of conceptual relations; sensations, feelings, passions, impulses, volitions, as they are given in the concreteness of the human personality, are possessed of an individual aspect which cannot be foreseen[4]." Inspite of his subtle epistemological analysis, Green confuses the subject-object relation with inter-objective one.

3. Principles of Psychology. Vol. I. p. 237-8.
4. Idealistic reaction against Science. p. 99.

ADVAITA VIEW

Śaṁkara's theory of self is an advance upon Green, in the sense that it includes the epistemological analysis of the latter and yet in the tradition of ancient vedānta, maintains the ultimate nature of self. As against Green, he escapes pan-objectivism on the one side and agnosticism on the other. Self is not an object and yet known "because of the immediacy of the realisation of the inner self[5]." It is foundational consciousness and cannot be its own object. It is self-proved, eternal, unchanging, neither body nor life nor mind. The consciousness of the individual objects is temporary and changing but our consciousness of existence is unfailing[6]. It is eternally free and disembodied, all pervading, detached, without parts and devoid of all activities. Śaṁkara denies evolution to self. Self, according to Sureśvara, is unevolving (avikāri). Evolution or modification of self is illusory like the crookedness of a stick in water[7]. By this the advaitis conclude the unreality of change, time and Becoming. Śaṁkara also denies reality to multiplicity. Individuals are merely reflections of one Brahman who is unmodified like the lump of iron.[8] Śaṁkara says that eternal consciousness manifests itself in various forms of illusion,[9] for it is that which abides in appearance.[10] According to Sureśwara, Kutastha is the timeless witness manifesting itself in times. But this by no means implies that Śaṁkara, like Bradley, accepts the reality of appearances in Absolute. The appearances are merely superimposed on Brahman. According to Śaṁkara, the world of appearances is unreal but its substratum is real. By "thisness" Brahman is itself manifested.[11] The 'what' is merely a superimposition on

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5. अपरोक्ष त्वाच्च प्रत्यगात्म प्रसिद्धे : —Vide S. B. I. i. 1.
6. S. Com. on Gita. II. 16.
7. Vide. Naiskarmyasiddhi II. 84.
8. कूटवन्निर्विं कारेण स्थित : कूटस्थ उच्यते —Vide Pan-cadasi VI. 22.
9. अनेक माया वञ्चनादि प्रकारेण स्थितः कूटस्थः —S. Com. on Gita. XV. 17.
10. कूटः माया वञ्चना, जिह्मना कुटिलता । कूटे स्थितः कूटस्थः —Ibid.
11. इदन्तया ब्रह्म सदैव रूप्यते —Vivekacudamani 238.

this. The very existence of many is due to Āvidyā. Human life is all ignorance.

It is, however, difficult to see how such a philosophy can maintain the reality of philosophy itself or that of philosopher, or liberation etc. Inspite of all the defence of Śaṁkara against calling him a Buddhist in disguise, nihilism is the logical corollary of such a view. The cherished values of human life have been sacrificed at the altar of logic. Sri Aurobindo's revolt against such a view is not a defence of pragmatic values, but that of our greatest spiritual aspirations, the very destiny of man. Śaṁkara's Philosophy has no place for Śaṁkara himself. Neither has it any place for ethics or religion since ethics pre-supposes freedom of will and religion is a concern of free individuals. All things concerning social nature of man lose their significance. All values are denied in a supreme value, which not being integral, negates all. In spite of Śaṁkara's devotional writings, religion cannot be nourished on a Philosophy in which individual is a mere reflection of Reality and God only a phenomenon. Śaṁkara exclusively emphasises on one aspect of experience. But the other, the aspect of change, evolution, multiplicity and becoming is equally significant.

BRADLEY AND BOSANQUET

Like Śaṁkara, Bradley believes that the perfect is motionless and like him finds all thoughts and things of the world as self-contradictory and hence mere appearance, but unlike him, he is anxious to maintain the reality of appearances in Absolute. It is, however, difficult to see as to how, this is possible, when both selfhood and individuality is denied to them? As a matter of fact, Bradley himself feels the difficulty and takes recourse to 'somehow' since he has already burnt all his boats[12]. Similarly, Bosanquet, inspite of all his faith in Keat's description of the world as a vale of soul making, cherishes a view not far removed from Māyāvāda. According to him, the formal distinctness of the finite selves is an aapearance due to impotence and incidental

12. "Every thing which appears is 'somehow' real in such a way as to be self-consistent."

—*Bradley. Appearance and Reality*. p. 123.

to their finitude. He shrinks to call the individual a member in the Absolute simply because, such an expression might imply that it is separately and with relative independence, a standing differentiation of the Absolute. Bradley maintains the illusoriness of the finite individuals in his famous analogy of window frames. It is, perhaps, in the sense of mystic experience that both Bradley and Bosanquet so much emphasise on transmutation, merger and disappearance of finite selves in Absolute but even if it is so, mystic experience is only one side of the shield. Even if it is the sole essence of religious experience, what is lost is only the fictitious ego and not the real individual which is as much real as God. Bradley rejects the self as mere appearance. It is this blunder which is responsible for all his difficulty of the terms and relations. As Prof. S. Aliotta aptly puts it, "Nothing but the continuous presence of subject can bridge over the gulf between one term and another and enable the intellect to grasp the relation between an antecedent which has ceased to exist and a certain consequent which has not yet come into existence[13]."

THE PERSONALISTS AND THEISTS

In contrast to the Absolutists, the personalists and the theists, the advocates of moral and religious values, maintain the absolute reality of the individual. Prof. Pringle Pattison revolts against the minimisation of human values as Bradley and Bosanquet did. Man is as much necessary for God as God for man.[14] Finite centres may infinitely overlap in content but they cannot overlap in existence. They are formally distinct because they are really so. Pringle Pattison joins hands with Leibniz to maintain the law of identity of indiscernibles as necessarily true of all existence. The many, as Rāmānuja points out are the self-expression, the attributes, the modes of One. The finite self is an inseparable attribute of the Infinite, real and permanent though controlled by God in all its modifications. The plurality of souls is evident from the distribution of pleasure and pain. Both Rāmānuja and Pringle

13. Idealistic Re-action against Science. p. 108.

14. Cf: "As for the question whether Heaven wants Man, answer is that if Heaven did not want him he would not want Heaven."
—*Sri Aurobindo. Vide—Among the Great by D. K. Roy.* p. 303.

Pattison equally emphasise the fact that the existence of finite individual is as much true and important from the absolute view point as from the practical. This is further proved with reference to moral and religious values. The finite individuals are substantial and not mere adjectival. In maintaining the reality of the individual, Pringle Pattison is thus far more emphatic than Rāmānuja. As against the absolutists, he points out, that things are not adjectives to one another. Even the very existence of illusion, it may be said against Śaṁkara, presupposes some real individual who is under illusion. Every individual must possess a substantive existence. "To exist means to be the subject of qualities, to have or possess a nature,[15]" says Pringle Pattison. If individuals are simply pipes, or jets of a fountain, there is no creation, no real differentiation and no mystery. The self views the world from its own finite centre. Morality presupposes freedom of will without which we are no better than mere automata.

Such a view is, however, only another side of the picture. Its merit lies in its assertions but its negations tend to take it to another extreme. Unity is as much real as multiplicity. Individual is no more a part of Absolute or its attribute or mode than it is its appearance. Organic relation cannot explain the ways of Absolute. As Sri Aurobindo beautifully puts it, "All these things it can be at once, eternal, spirit universalised in cosmos, individualised in its beings; it can too found the consciousness rejecting, governing or responding to the action of Nature in any one of them, put the others behind it or away from it, know itself as pure eternity, self-supporting universality or exclusive individuality.[16]"

THE INTEGRAL VIEW OF SRI AUROBINDO

THE REAL INDIVIDUAL

"Man", according to Sri Aurobindo, "is a spirit using the mind, life and body for an individual and a communal experience and self-manifestation in the universe.[17]" The Sachchidānanda itself

15. Idea of God. p. 282.
16. The Synthesis of Yoga, p. 717-18.
17. Ibid. p. 713.

descends in the finite for the delight of self-manifestation. Self is the same as Absolute. Thus, in the integral absolutism of Sri Aurobindo, the individual is as much real as the universal or Transcendent. Such a view steers clear of both the extremes of a complete affirmation and absolute denial. The individual is neither a mere shadow nor something existing apart from the Divine. It is real and yet real only in the Absolute. Separative tendency leads to what Sri Aurobindo calls, "Original ignorance.[18]" From the point of view of creation, the individual is the concentration point of the consciousness-force. "The individual is a centre of the whole universal consciousness.[19]" Integral knowledge does not result in the abolition of the individual since this concentration of the consciousness-force is not an illusion but a real purposive activity, the attainment of the return of the Force to its original home in Sachchidānanda.. Nature becomes self-conscious in man. The manifestation of Divinity in individual is the condition of the evolution of Nature, back to its source. Consciousness-Force creates through diffusion and concentration. Universe is the diffusion of the Absolute in infinite Space and Time, the individual, its concentration within spatio-temporal limits. In individual, Prakriti turns back to perceive Purusha, world seeks after self; God having entirely become Nature, Nature seeks to become progressively God. Individual is true and lives even in unity with universal. Man's aim is to universalise and impersonalise himself, in order to manifest the Divine. Yet, he is called upon to preserve his individuality, even when he reaches the widest universality of consciousness. It is the ego that is to be uprooted. Individual is an entological reality, eternal as Absolute, not co-existent but existent in and through him.

The ultimate Reality, according to Sri Aurobindo, is a unity manifesting in trinity—of essentiality, commonality and individuality. The unity, however, is not organic but more complex than that. It is a spiritual relation expressed in the famous upaniśadic formula of a whole coming out of a whole and leaving whole

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18. Life Divine. Vol. II. IInd Edition. p. 441.
19. Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition. p. 45.

behind it. Individual is closely related with universal and cannot exist without it and the universal is closely related with the Transcendent which expresses himself through individual and universal. As Sri Aurobindo puts it, "For the particular, the individual can have no self-existence, no truth, no valid force except in so far as it reflects rightly and relates and confirms itself justly to the universal, to the all-being, the all-knowledge, the all-will and follows its true drift towards self-realisation and vast delight in itself." So far, Sri Aurobindo agrees with the Absolutists. But, as he goes on to add, "......the universe also has no self-existence, truth or validity except as it expresses the divine Being, Knowledge, Will, Power, Delight of Him who surpasses all universe, so much so that with a petty fragment of His-being and a single ray of His consciousness He has created all these worlds[20]." Thus like Bradley, Sri Aurobindo believes that the universal is individual, but then in the tradition of vedanta he maintains the self to be equally real and truly individual. In fact, McTaggart's difficulty of calling a unity of selves as one Absolute Self is due to the rigidity of the intellect. Mind cannot grasp the possibility of a whole constituted of individual wholes but this is precisely, the law of the consciousness. The complete individual is the cosmic individual, since our individuality can be complete only when we have taken the universe into ourselves and transcended it.

Individual has been often identified with ego and its transcendence misunderstood as the extinction of individuality. But ego is, at best, a practical nucleus for the pragmatic aspect of life. Behind it is the Purusha, the real Individual who determines, supports and yet exceeds it. Thus the temporality of the ego and the eternity of the individual are perfectly compatible[21]. The multiplicity is real in the Divine. Differentiation is a means to greater unity. God is in man and man is in God. Individual has transcendent within him. He can be one with the Divine

20. Ideal and Progress. p. 16-17.

21. "The individual therefore exists though he exceeds the little separative ego.; the univeral exists and is embraced by him but it does not absorb and abolish all individual differentiation, even though by his universalising himself, the limitation which we call the ego is overcome."
—*Sri Aurobindo. Life Divine. Vol. II. IInd Edition.* p. 92-93.

and yet enjoy Him in the world. We can have mystic union with God and also love and worship Him as an Other. All this seems to be paradoxical to finite reason since as Sri Aurobindo points out suffers from a threefold error, "......the error of making an unbridgeable gulf between the Absolute and the relative, the error of making too simple and rigid and extending too far the law of contradiction, and the error of conceiving in terms of time, the genesis of things which have their origin and first habitat in the Eternal[22]." These are the fundamental difficulties which lie at the root of the other theories which we have discussed so far.

DOUBLE SOUL

Like every other principle physical, vital and mental, the soul according to Sri Aurobindo, is also double. There is a surface mind and a subliminal, an outer life and a subliminal force, physical body and subtler material existence. So too we have a double psychic entity in us; the surface desire-soul which works in our vital cravings, emotions, aesthetic faculty and mental seeking for power, knowledge and happiness, and a subliminal psychic entity which is our soul behind the outer form of psychic existence. These external forms are the basis of our egoistic existence while the subliminal constitutes our larger true individuality. In the subliminal, the man comes in direct contact with the universal. The thick walls which divide our physical, vital and mental being become only rarefied medium, at once of separation and communication of our subliminal matter, life and mind with their cosmic forms. But our surface soul is shut off in egoistic walls, in entering which the cosmic Delight is dwarfed, distorted or masked. It is here that we arrive at the triple misinterpretation of the pure essential joy of being in terms of pleasure, pain and indifference.

The real soul, according to Sri Aurobindo, is the **Psychic being.** It is also called the **Caitya Purusha.** At first it is veiled by body, life and mind, but as it grows, it becomes capable of coming forward and dominating them. But, Jivatman or individual spirit is different from psychic being. As Sri Aurobindo says, "The psy-

22. Ibid. p. 99.

chic being realises its oneness with the true being, the Jivātman but it does not change into it[23]." The Jivātman is the many aspect of the Divine while the psychic being is its evolutionary poise in the earth nature. Sri Aurobindo describes Jivâtman as the multiple Divine manifested here as the individualised self or spirit of the created being[24]." This Jivātman is the universal Ātman, psychic being is individual soul. Ātman is different from inner being. It is self existent and eternal. Psychic being is within, Jivātman is above. "Jivâtman is the individual self the **central being**[25]." It holds together the mental, vital and the physical being through psychic. It is unborn for it does not descend into the being but is above it. It integrates the entire consciousness. It does not evolve but presides over the evolution. The psychic being on the other hand enters the evolution. It enters the body at birth and goes out of it at death. It can be described as Jivâtman entering into birth. Thus psychic being is merely another aspect of central being.

With Vedānta Sri Aurobindo maintains that the real self is beyond time and space, without name and form. It is featureless, relationless, self blissful, pure conscious existence, self-sufficient and eternally satisfied with pure-being. But while this deeper self is unmodified, the outer self is constantly changing. It is by a concentration on this outer self in abstraction of the inner reality, that the Buddhists, the pragmatists and the sceptics reached their conclusions. The advaitins, on the other hand, negated the outer self. Sri Aurobindo steers clear of both these extremes of the negation of self and the negation of Nature. According to him, "The self has two aspects and the results of realising it correspond to these two aspects. One is static, a condition of wide peace, freedom, silence; the silent self is uneffected by any action or experience; it impartially supports them but does not seem to originate them at all, rather to stand back detached or unconcerned, udāsina. The other aspect is dynamic and that experienced as a cosmic Self or Spirit which not only supports but originates and contains the

23. Letters of Sri Aurobindo, Ist. Series. p. 137.
24. Lights on Yoga. p. 29.
25. Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual. No. 6 August 47, p. 38.

whole cosmic action—not only that part of it which concerns our physical selves but also all that is beyond it—this world and all other world, the supra-physical as well as physical ranges of the universe. Moreover, we feel it as one in all; but also we feel it as above all, transcendent, surpassing all individual birth or cosmic existence[26]." The integral knowledge of self is the knowledge of both these aspects.

INTEGRAL PSYCHOLOGY

Psycho-analysis have done valuable work in the field of Unconscious. The unconscious, according to Freud, is dynamic and consists of primitive and infantile experiences and impulses. It is a reservoir of repressed desires and memories. It represents the savage, the child and the animal in man. Its ideas are a-logical and a-moral. Jung explores a yet wider region. Unconscious, according to him, includes all unconscious psychic-phenomena. It is personal as well as collective. The former includes Freud's preconscious and unconscious and consists of those experiences that have been forgotten and "repressed" the latter the instincts, the "primordial idea" or "archetypes". It consists of all those psychical types of reaction and tendencies that are common to the race. It is inherited by way of structure.

What Sri Aurobindo calls the subconscient, corresponds to the unconscious of Freud and Jung. According to him when things are rejected from all other parts of nature, they go either into the environmental consciousness around us and try to return from these or they sink into the subconscient and can come up from there even after long interval. This subconscient strongly resists all changes. It is constantly maintaining and bringing back the inertia, weakness, obscurity and ignorance which afflict the physical mind and vital or the obscure fears, desires, angers, lusts of the physical, vital or the illnesses, dullnesses, pains, incapabilities of the body.

Like Freud's unconscious, this subconscient is the source of dreams. It is the extreme border of the inner being where it meets the Inconscient. In sleep the physical part of man relapses to

26. Lights on Yoga. p. 56-57.

this region. It is an ante-chamber of the Inconscient through which its formations rise into our waking or our subliminal being. Sri Aurobindo agrees with Freud's conception of dream-mechanism with the exception of not laying so much emphasis on the role of sex in dream-formation. Dream is a recurrence of repressed impressions, when this subconscious activity sinks back into complete inconscience, we experience dreamless sleep. The dream continues in subconscient states, only the mind does not record it. With its formulations of the impressions of various other levels the subliminal also sometimes comes to the forefront. If we live more deeply, our dreams may come to subliminal from subconscient. Sri Aurobindo believes in the possibility of a coherent knowledge of sleep life.

THE SUPER-CONSCIENT

The psycho-analysts explain every phenomena, higher or lower, with reference to the unconscious. Thus all religion, art, literature, occult and every thing great in human life has been traced to repressed unconscious desires. Religion, according to Freud is the gratification of the infantile wish for the father, originating in oedipus complex and the primitive consciousness of guilt of the murder of primeval father; art a sublimation of sexual desires, and culture and civilization, an artificial mechanism of totems and taboos. Adler traces everything to mastery motive and the phenomenon of compensation and Jung to the racial unconscious.

The contribution of the psycho-analysts in the field of psychology cannot be easily undervalued but the explanation of the higher and the lower with reference to the same unconscious region, threatens a degeneration of human values. However similar the two may appear, sex and devotion to Divine are widely divergent phenomena and hence cannot be traced to the same genesis. As against the psycho-analysts, Sri Aurobindo clearly distinguishes between various phenomena and traces them to different regions. The higher phenomena of human life, the art, religious experience, occult, poetry and others do not belong to subconscient but to superconscient planes. As Sri Aurobindo says, "The superconsc ent, not the sub-conscient, is the true foun-

dation of things"............"You must know the whole before you can know the part and the highest before you can truly know the lowest. That is the promise of the greater psychology awaiting its hour before which these poor gropings will disappear and come to nothing.[27]" This is the integral psychology of Sri Aurobindo. It is integral in a double sense. Firstly, it deals with the whole nature of man and secondly, it deals with the relation of the individual planes of consciousness with the cosmic levels. It aims not only at integration of personality, but also its psychicisation and transformation. It is more thoroughly developed in integral yoga which we shall discuss in sequence.

Our conscient being, according to integral psychology, is in between the subconscient and the superconscient. These are the two formulations of the same reality. The essence of the former is life, that of the latter is light. In the former, the consciousness is involved in action while in the latter action reenters light. Intuitive knowledge is common to both. But, whereas in the subconscient the intuition manifests itself in the action, in superconscient it manifests in its true nature as authentic knowledge.

Sri Aurobindo's conception of superconscient is a great corrective to the one sided theory of the psycho-analysts. This superconscient is the same as the spirit, the God, the oversoul. It is ultimately our own highest, deepest and vastest self. It is the Sachchidānanda creating us and the world by his power of divine knowledge and will. Thus integral psychology of Sri Aurobindo is consistent with his integral Philosophy. The individual represents the entire cosmos in miniature. The planes of individual consciousness are continuous with their corresponding cosmic planes. Individual is a microcosm in macrocosm. There is one indivisible matter, life and mind in the universe.

SUBLIMINAL

But perhaps the greatest discovery of the psychology of integral yoga is the subliminal. The subliminal is the meeting place of the involved and evolved consciousness. It consists of an inner mind, an inner vital being and an inner subtle physical being, larger

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27. Bases of Yoga, p. 128-129.

than our conscious being and nature. Like superconscient, it is also continuous with the outer world. It has subtle senses through which it can directly experience the universal in all its levels. It gives us inspirations, intuitions, ideas, will and sense-suggestions and urges to action etc. through trance and deep sleep. It is the seer of inner things and of supra-physical experiences. It is called subliminal not because it is lower but simply because it is behind the veil. Sri Aurobindo ascribes to subliminal, the occult power of telepathy, clairvoyance etc. It can immensely widen the scope of knowledge though for the outer mind, it is difficult to understand its symbols and images. The most important power of the subliminal, which makes it so much useful in yoga, is its widening to come in direct contact with the entire outer world. It can thus directly know the other selves and the outer world. It can have an immediate, ultimate, accurate and spontaneous knowledge of persons, objects, occult powers and intangible energies of world-nature that surround us and impinge upon our personality, physicality, mind-force and life-force. It can even look into future and into the possible courses of the subtle world-powers. With the help of the subliminal, the soul can truly control the mental, vital and physical, thus leading to an integral transformation and integral knowledge. Such a knowledge, however, is incomplete till one goes to the other ends of the subliminal, the lower and the higher, the subconscient and the superconscient. The subliminal as opposed to subconscient, is a secret intraconscient or circumconscient. It is by the gradual widening of this subliminal that the individual tends to become more and more universal, and by the breaking of its walls that man attains cosmic consciousness and thus becomes a true universal-individual.

LAW OF KARMAN

Thus summum bonum of integral psychology and integral philosophy is the evolution of man. Hence, Sri Aurobindo does not admit the popular notion of the law of Karman. The idea of petty rewards and punishments cannot appeal to the rational mind. The law, however, is admitted in a general sense that as a man sows, so he reaps. Man is the master of his destiny. Ac-

cording to Sri Aurobindo even the heredity and environments are determined by the present and past actions of man. Sometimes he also shares the results of his Karmas with others and also vice versa, since all existence is continuous. But, there is also a continuity between different births. The being, nature and circumstances of the present life are the results of man's own inner and outer activities. Apparently, sometimes we may not find justice in nature's laws but Sri Aurobindo believes that on the whole the doctrine of Karman is true. Not only the action but even the thoughts and feelings have their corresponding results, though action being the greater part of life, has the greatest amount of result. It is more so since man can exercise a greater control over his actions than on his thoughts and feelings. But, as contrary to fatalism, Sri Aurobindo points out that it is not the law of Karman which determines the destiny of the soul but rather the soul which uses the law as one of its instruments Karman does not violate spiritual freedom. As we ascend in the chain of evolution, the hold of mechanical law is gradually weakened and we arrive at more and more spiritual freedom. As Sri Aurobindo points out, " ..... Prakriti is the field of law and process but the soul, the purusha, is the giver of the sanction, anumantā, and even if ordinarily it chooses to remain a witness and concede an automatic sanction, it can be, if it wills; the master of its nature, Ishwara[28]." The soul seeks self-expression and experience in the body and the development of the nature through cosmic experience, so that eventually it may grow out of ignorance. It is this intelligence which guides the law to which the psychic being assents. Being and its will are more important than fate. The nature of the various kinds of energies of the consciousness-force of Spirit make an exceedingly complex sum of manifold experiences which must be taken into account. The very law of the survival of fittest is based on justice in Nature that the energy put forward should have in its own kind its fitting reward from her. The simple logic of correlation or the idea of retribution of Karman as a compensation for the injustice of life and Nature, is a feeble basis for the law of Karman. Such a law

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28. Life Divine. Vol. II. IInd Edition. p. 629.

has no ethical justification, for virtue claims no rewards. In the processes of Nature, there is a lesson of experience. Moral law does not govern the Nature. As Sri Aurobindo points out, "All the secret of the circumstances of rebirth centre around one capital need of the soul, the need of growth, the need of experience; that governs the line of its evolution and all the rest is accessory[29]." This brings us to the problem of rebirth.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF REBIRTH

Thus Sri Aurobindo rejects the old religious idea of the law of Karman as determining rebirth. His own solution is based on certain fundamental postulates, of which one is that "......that which has no end must necessarily have had no beginning[30]". If the soul is not immortal, the law of transmigration is broken, and an immortal soul cannot be the product of mortal matter though by its descent into the latter it may transfer some of its spiritual qualities to it. Secondly, every stage in development presupposes a past. Hence, the personality of the soul presupposes a previous birth for its development. Thirdly, if personality is a result of the mental, vital or physical heredity, then the soul must be a detached something. Now, while real and imortal, the soul should also be eternal and then either it must be changeless self or a timeless Purusha. It must be noted here, that the problem of rebirth does not arise in theories as that of Advaita or Buddhism since whereas in the former all embodiment is a mere illusion and the self is eternally liberated, in the latter there is no permanent self. Rebirth presupposes a static as well as dynamic soul since in the absence of either it is meaningless. Thus rebirth is a necessary corollary in the Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo. It is an indispensable machinery for the working out of a spiritual evolution. Change and evolution is real since ascent is a logical consequence of the descent of the Spirit. Thus spiritual regeneration, release and evolution of soul are real phenomena and so also rebirth. If the Reality is changeless as it is in Māyāvāda or if it is all change as it is in Buddhism then all these are unreal. In Sri Aurobindo's Philo-

29. Ibid. p. 637.
30. Ibid. p. 551.

sophy, on the other hand, Sachchidānanda exists in each being and affirms Himself in individual. "In the individual he discloses his total existence by oneness with all in the universality. In the individual he discloses too his transcendence as the Eternal in whom all the universal unity is founded[31]."

Hence, birth and death are not sheer accidents. Human life is not a mere chance-product. It is a term in a graded series, through which the secret spirit in the universe develops his purpose gradually, and works it out finally, through the enlarging and ascending individual soul consciousness in the body. As a concentration of the Divine Consciousness the individual has two aspects, a spiritual Person and a soul of personality. As the spiritual impersonal Person, he is One with Sachchidānanda, while as the soul of personality, his own evolution must follow the laws of cosmic evolution. This is the principle underlying the integral yoga. The soul is not a bye product of body, life or mind and hence it can pass to the stages higher or lower to them. It may adopt different bodies according to its various manifestations. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "The soul is not bound by the formula of mental humanity : it did not begin with that and will not end with it ; it had a prehuman past, it has a superhuman future.[32]" The individual soul develops from form to form till it reaches man which is merely a stage to yet higher levels. The transition from lower to higher, from animal to man is too decisive to be reversed. It is possible only where the conversion has not been decisive. Thus the normal law is the recurrence of birth in new human forms. It is more so, since even after assuming human form the work has not been finished, as the soul has to realise yet higher possibilities. When we ascribe a spiritual significance to cosmic evolution, not limited to our own place but a part of a larger universal totality, rebirth becomes an absolute necessity. Again, since our world is not the only world, the soul need not enter body immediately after death. According to Sri Aurobindo, if the experiences of soul are sufficiently complex to need assimilation and if the mental and vital individuality are sufficiently developed to be attracted by other planes, there must be

31. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 565-66.
32. Ibid. p. 571.

an interval between birth and birth and passage to other worlds. Birth and death are links in the same process of evolution of soul. After death the soul may stay in some intermediary plane or in some imaginary desire - constructions. It may also pass through physical, vital and mental worlds and even stay there temporarily.

The memory of past lives is of no importance here since the evolutionary purpose of the assimilation and a creative and effective absorption of the essential results of the past energies for the development of personality, does not require it. The absence of memory, is no more a disproof of rebirth than it is a denial of our past in the present life. What is immortal is not the 'I' of the moment but the psychic entity within us. The more spiritual the vital and mental become, the more are their chances of survival since then the walls between the inner and the outer man would break and the mental and vital representatives of the immortal psychic being would govern the life. The physical too can survive only if it is rendered so plastic as to answer every spiritual change. It is not only the physical decay but the inner need for a better instrument that leads the soul to discard the body. Thus, in the ultimate analysis, rebirth is not a machinery for the persistent renewal or prolongation of an unchanging personality but a means for the evolution of the spiritual being in Nature. The involution of the Spirit in matter and its consequent evolution is the entire theme of Sri Aurobindo's explanation of the world-enigma. How far such a solution answers the problems of creation and the relation of One and Many, we propose to examine in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI

WORLD AND CREATION

"Consciousness is a fundamental thing, it is the fundamental thing in existence; it is the energy, the motion, the movement of consciousness that creates the universe and all that is in it—not only the macrocosm but the microcosm is nothing but consciousness arranging itself. For instance when consciousness in movement, or rather a certain stress of movement, forgets itself in the action, it becomes an apparently "unconscious" energy; when it forgets itself in the form it becomes the electron, the atom, the material object. In reality it is still consciousness that works in the energy and determines the form and the evolution of form. When it wants to liberate itself, slowly, evolutionally, out of matter, but still in the form, it emerges as life, as animal, as man and it can go on evolving itself still further out of its involution and become some thing more than mere man."—Sri Aurobindo.

Letters of Sri Aurobindo. Vide—Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual No. 6. August 47. p. 50.

All around us we find motion, change and diversity as well as status and unity. The One and the Many, the Being and the Becoming are equally the facts of experience and a sound philosophy must find place for all of them. Their inter-relation, however, is the crux of the problem. Is the Reality One or Many? If Many, then what is the relation between these many which leads to the experience of one unified world by all? If One, then how is the fact of diversity in the world explained? If both, then again what is the relation between them? If many is the manifestation of One how, when and why the One became Many? Again, is becoming an eternal fact? If yes, what is its relation with being; if no then how the becoming came out of being. Is the world a creation or manifestation? Who is the creator? What is the matrix of the creation? To sum up, our enquiry is concerned with the what, how and why of the world.

In the present Chapter we have mainly confined ourselves to the explanation of the what of the world and postponed the treatment of the how and why for the next chapter. For this purpose we have selected five typical theories. Non-dualism emphasises on One as the sole reality. At the other extreme is pluralism. Nihilism negates both. On the other hand, is the theory which affirms both. This affirmation may be of two types; dualistic and monistic, e. g. Sāṁkhya and the integral theory of Sri Aurobindo. Again, these five theories may be further divided in to three kinds. Nihilists believe the world to be unreal, Non-dualists as real-unreal and the rest as real. The first two theories take it as the product of ignorance, the last group conceives the primordial matrix as force. In this group again, there is divergence about the nature of force. Sāmkhya and Leibniz believe it to be blind, while Sri Aurobindo conceives it as conscious. Finally, this group conceives the world as manifestation.

MĀYĀVÁDA

Śamkara bases his theory of Māyā on the conception of Adhyāsa. Hence, to examine the theory of Māyā, let us first enquire into the nature of Adhyasa. Adhyasa, according to Śamkara, is the result of the coupling of the true with the unture (सत्यान्टते मिथुनी कृत्य)[1] Śaṁkara defines Adhyasa as, "the appearance elsewhere, with a nature like to that of recollection of what was seen before" स्मृति रूपः परत्र पूर्व द्दष्टा वभास ।।[2]

But, this ignorance or error is merely a misplaced knowledge. It does not deny the existence of what is superimposed but only the inconsistency of its perception at the place where it was not. The analogies drawn from the errors of mind cannot explain the entological facts of the existence of world or individual since mind is merely a part and not even the highest part of our being. Mental illusions do not affect the reality of the object wrongly perceived.

Adhyāsa has been further defined as the cognition of something

1. S. B. I. i. 1.
2. Ibid.

on a thing other than itself.[3]

"अध्यासो नाम अतस्मिं स्तद बुद्धि"

This definition, again presupposes the existence of two objects. As Sri Aurobindo points out, "The analogy of mental hallucination would only be applicable if we admit a Brahman without names, forms and relations and a world of names, forms and relations as equal realities imposed one upon the other.[4] Śamkara is himself conscious of such an objection. He apprehends a two-fold objection from the Purva-Paksim. How can there be the superimposition of the object and its attributes on the inner self which is a non-object; and again if self alone is real and not-self non-existent, Adhyāsa is impossible. But the arguments which Śamkara advances to meet these objections are far from convincing. To the first objection, he says that the self is not non-object since it is the object of the consciousness of I. (अस्म त्प्रत्यय विजयत्वात्).[5] This self is not the Ātman of Vedānta which alone is real for Śamkara. Hence, he hastens to add, "because of the immediacy of the realization of inner self." "अपरोक्षत्वाच्च प्रत्यगात्म प्रसिद्धः". [6]But again, this is the knowledge of the self as subject and hence the objection stands unanswered. Śamkara advances another argument to prove his case. As he says, "And there is no rule that an object can be super-imposed only on another object that is present before us.[7]" But if this is accepted, then both the definitions of Adhyāsa must be rejected since in both the super-imposition of one object on another has been maintained. Śamkara further illustrates it by pointing out that it is so, for upon ether, though imperceptible, the unthinking superimpose surface impurity etc. But here it must be noted that though we do not perceive sky we infer the existence of the ether through experience and hence the analogy can be valid only if the existence of not-self is also granted as experienced. Thus, we find that Śamkara's theory of Adhyāsa, whatever its significance to explain mental error, does not stand

3. S. B. Introduction. अध्यास भाष्य ।
4. Life Divine. Vol. II Second Edition. p. 166.
5. ~~S. B. I. 1. 1.~~
6. S B. I. i. 1.
7. Ibid.

the scrutiny of logic. The experience of the reality of the world can be called an Adhyāsa only if mind is the Creator, a hypothesis which we have amply refuted.

Now, let us examine Śaṁkara's theory of Māyā. According to the logic of advaita, both unity and multiplicity can not be equally real. "Were both unity and multiplicity real we could not say of one whose standpoint is that of worldly action that he is caught in untruth............[8]". While distinguishing the objects of the waking state from that of dreams, Śaṁkara urges that the two, in so far as they are objects of consciousness, are unreal. "दृष्यत्वम असत्यत्व च अविशिष्ट उभयत्र".[9] The real is that which is present in all times (त्रैकाविकाद्यवाध्यत्वम्). It is that whichever was, is and will be (कालत्रपसत्रावत्). The world is said to be unreal since it is sublated by true knowledge. (ज्ञानैकनिवर्त्यत्वम्).[10] The recognition of the higher condemns the lower as unreal. What exists is becoming which is neither being nor non-being since it produces effects (अर्थक्रियाकारी). Whatever is different from Brahman is unreal. "The world neither is, nor is not and so its nature is indescribable." (तत्वात्यत्वाम अनिर्वचनीयपा). While it is different from being and non-being (सदसदविलक्षण) it shares the characters of both (सदसदात्मक). So, like Kant Śaṁkara calls it phenomena of Reality. (विकल्पो हिवस्तु). "The real is never known to have any relation with the unreal." (नहि सदसतो सम्बन्ध).[11] The world exists 'somehow', says Śaṁkara, since its relation with Brahman is indefinable (अनिर्वचनीय). Śaṁkara stands with Gaudapāda's theory of ajāti or non-evolution. The world is not involved or produced but seems to be so, on account of limited insight.

Śaṁkara uses various illustrations, such as that of rope and the snake, shell and silver, desert and mirage, to indicate that Brahman is not effected by the world, though the world is projected on it. It is not a transformation since the cause and the effect are diffe-

8. Ibid. II. 1. 14.
9. S. B. on Gaudapada Karika. II. 4.
10. S. B. III. 2. 4.
11. S. B. on Mandukya Upanished. II. 7.

rent. It is rather perversion or vivarta. Thus Māyā is called to be neither of the form of real nor of unreal nor of both, it is real-unreal and hence indescribable and of the form of untruth though eternal.[12] It should be noted that Śaṁkara strongly criticises the conception of world as dream and clearly distinguishes between prātikbhāsik and the vyāvahārik levels. Māyā is neither real like Brahman nor unreal like sky flower. It is modus operandi which coming from Brahman brings about the world. It is also called avidyā. It is the creative power of Iśwara and is in Him. It is the indestructible material substratum in the creation of the world.[13] Thus Śaṁkara rejects all change, motion, evolution and multiplicity as unreal or mere ignorance.

The latter advaitins, by going a step further, arrive at a subjectivist conception of the world. While holding that our consciousness gives rise to the world of objects, and disappears with the cessation of the subject-object relation the authors of Chitsukhi, Advaitasiddhāntamuktāvali and Yoga Vāśista come to a sort of solipcism. This is the *reductio ad absurdum* of Māyāvāda. Changes, evolution and individuality are too potent facts of experience to be rejected by any subtle logic. The law of non-contradiction is not applicable to the matters concerning Infinite. Brahman is neither divided nor limited by its manifestation in the world. Śaṁkara ascribes the world to Avidyā but does not explain the cause of it. Ignorance is there in the world but the task of Philosophy is the explanation of this very ignorance. The validity of any theory, here, can be judged by integral experience. The test of the integrity of the experience is its all-inclusive synthetic nature. All explanations of the ultimate why shall, by the very nature of the case, be mere descriptions of the integral experience. We can legitimately pass from known to unknown and hence an explanation which is fit in the nature of things shall be both valid and possible. The theory of Māyā does not fit in the integral experience which annulls none but affirms and integrates all. Philosophy is not mere common sense. It deals with the ultimate nature of

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12. Surya Purana. Quoted in S. P. B. I. 26.
13. Vivekachudaman. p. 108.

things and if from Pārmārthik standpoint the world is mithyā, no amount of logical subtleties can save it from its essential doom. It should be noted that it is by a more elaborate use of the same law of non-contradiction of which Śaṁkara makes so much, Nāgārjuna reduces all things to nothing. A merely logical and entirely negative approach will arive only at a one-sided view of reality. But the integral philosophy of upanisads on which Śaṁkara claims to have based his system proceeds through negative as well as positive approaches. It is useless to argue that at no point the becoming reaches being, since the bocoming, as a fact of experience, is the becoming of the being itself. Whatever is different from Brahman is unreal, but then whatever is must belong to Brahman. If there is any thing which is different from Brahman and yet a fact of experience, we arrive at a sort of dualism. An integral Absolute must find place for all types of experiences. If Brahman is not a mere conjurer of tricks,[14] all creation must be real and belong to Him. Śaṁkara's arguments about the relation between Absolute and the world are based on external relations. All relations within Absolute, as Bradley rightly points out, are internal and organic. Latest developments in Science and Philosophy have firmly established the truth of evolution and change. In Śamkara, there is a clear conflict between logic and experience. The man is always more than the Philosopher and in Śamkara the two are constantly in conflict. He is anxious to find a place for every kind of experience and yet the static logic of things which he exalts as supreme, every where distorts the experience and the whole thing becomes one-sided.

Finally, though Śaṁkara's theory of Creator has been established after a detailed critisism of rival theories, he forgets that the creation of many out of one requires a via media between the two. The finitising faculty of God of which our objects are the results, is only one of its power and not He himself—since if so then God becomes only dynamic. It was in this sense that

14. "An Omnipresent reality is the Brahman, not an omnipresent cause of persistent illusions."—*Sri Aurobindo.*

Life Divine, Vol. I. IInd Edition. p. 38.

the seers of Veda conceived of Māyā. Māyā, to them was a power of the Infinite consciousness to create name and form out of the vast unlimited Truth of infinite existence. If Śaṁkara's conception of Māyā is true, man is left in a perpetual dualism of soul and matter, Heaven and Earth, Good and Evil, Knowledge and Ignorance. Pessimism and optimism, both psychological and metaphysical, are equally true and false.

THE DUALISM OF SÂMKHYA

The ultimate Reality, according to Sāṁkhya Philosophy is two-fold, the conscious and the unconscious, the static and the dynamic, the spritual and the material, the supracosmic and the cosmic, the transcendent and the immanent. The former is called Purusha and the latter Prakṛiti. Purusha is the enjoyer, seer, intelligent, liberated, unqualitied and unmoved mover, Prakṛiti, on the otherhand, is the enjoyed, seen, nonintelligent, qualitied and dynamic Purusha and Prakṛiti are quite antithetical in their nature. It is hence, that all efforts to bring them together seem mere artificial patchworks which fail to stand criticism.

Sāmkhya advances the simile of the lame and the blind to explain the relation of Purusha and Prakṛiti. At another place they use the analogy of magnet and iron. But as Śamkara points out, this is contrary to the fundamental tenet of Śamkhya that Pradhāna is dynamic by nature. In the first simile, since Purusha is static and Prakṛiti non-intelligent, no communication is possible between them. It can be said with Bradley, that the separate en ities can only be united in a whole. Praśastapāda points out that Prakriti which is active by its very nature, can not rest idle. According to Śāmkhya philosopher, "There is nothing more modest than Prakṛiti who does not expose herself again to the gaze of Purusha after she knows that she has been gazed at.[15] "But how can the non-intelligent Prakṛiti know, that Purusha has stopped gazing. Again, according to Sāmkhya," Like a faithful bride she retires as soon as she comes to know that her presence is harmful to Purusha" दोष बोधोऽपि नोचसमर्पणं प्रधानात

15. Ishwar Krishna. Samkhya Karika. 61.

कुलवधूवत्[16]. This analogy, however, is inadequate to explain the ways of non-intelligent Prakṛiti. According to Ishwara Kṛsna, Purusha's purpose is the sole cause of the evolution of Prakṛiti. But, it is difficult to understand as to how can the eternally liberated self have any purpose to be achieved. If Purusha is an unmoved mover and Prakṛiti non intelligent, purpose remains unexplained and the entire evolution becomes mechanical. According to Sāṁkhya Kārikā, "As a dancer, having exhibited hereself on the stage ceases to dance, so does Nature ceases when she has made hereself manifest to Purusha[17]." This analogy also does not apply to Prakṛiti which is purposeless. Again, how can the mere presence of Purusha excite any movement in Prakṛiti when the two are diametrically opposite to each other.

According to Sāmkhya, the evolution of Prakṛiti requires its proximity to Purusha, but if Prakṛiti is dynamic by nature it cannot be conceived independent of Purusha. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "Being and its consciousness—Force, Spirit and Nature cannot be fundamentally dual: what Nature does is really done by the Spirit[14]." Like Māyāvāda, Sāṁkhya also does not give any explanation of the origin of ignorance. The difficulties of Sāṁkhya, hitherto referred, can be reconciled only on the basis of integral monism. An absolute dualism fails to explain itself. All finite causes presuppose some ultimate cause. Purusha and Prakṛiti are merely two different facts of the Absolute.

PLURALISM OF LEIBNIZ

The world according to Leibniz is constituted of infinite monads. These monads are of various kinds, sleeping, dreaming and waking. There is no absolute difference but a real continuity between physical, vital and mental. It is not that the same monad becomes every thing, but every monad has the potentiality to develop into any kind. The entire difference is simply due to difference of manifestation. Monad is dynamic though indivisible. It contains both form and matter, both activity and passivity. It is a

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16. Ibid. 59.
17. Ibid. 60.
18. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 47.

unit of the conservation of force. It is endowed with perception as well as appetition. It is windowless and develops from within. It is a microcosm in macrocosm.

Now, like all pluralists Leibniz has to face the problem of the relation of One and Many, for harmony is the acme of existence. If the monads are windowless, how do they experience one world? The law of pre-established harmony does not explain the unity of the world. It only implies innumerable similar worlds. It is undeniable that each man looks to the world from his own perspective, but the experience of a common world, due to close interpenetration of the experience of different individuals, cannot be denied. Without any common essence in the indiscernibles, the law of pre-established harmony is merely a cloak to cover the gaps of monadology. The law of continuity presupposes an essential identity. All distinction is due to richness of manifestation.

NIHILISM OF NĀGĀRJUNA

Nāgārjuna first reduces everything to relation and then by proving the unintelligibility of the relations by his fourfold dialectic, he shows that nothing is absolutely real. Nothing exists from metaphysical point of view, not even the metaphysics itself. According to Śaṁkara, the relation of Brahman and world is inexplicable. Nāgārjuna concludes that both are equally false and non-existent.

This purely dialectical approach, however, cannot explain away the knowledge based on experience. All appearances must be the appearances of some Reality. Nothing can come out of nothing. The explanation of the world cannot be found in a supreme negation like the "Nothing in itself" of Nāgārjuna. What appears a mere blank to the mind, is known as an indefinable all through consciousness. Being as much real as Non Being. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "It is not in itself, a sheer emptiness; for a vacant Absolute is no Absolute. Our conception of a void zero is only a conceptual sign of our mental inability to know or grasp it[19]."

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19. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 421.

THE INTEGRAL APPROACH OF SRI AUROBINDO

WORLD AS THE PLAY OF FORCE

The universe, according to Sri Aurobindo, is a boundless energy of infinite existence, infinite movement, infinite activity, pouring itself in limitless space and eternal Time. With Heraclitus, Sri Aurobindo believes that the world is a creation of Force. This is equally confirmed by Science and Philosophy, reason and intuition. An infinite Consciousness-Force is the creator, preserver and destroyer of all things. The differences in quality and quantity are simply due to variations in the intensity of the concentration of this Force. It is indivisible and unlike mental consciousness, does not give an equal part of itself ,but its whole self to every thing at one and the same time. "The form and manner and result of the force of action vary infinitely but the eternal, primal, infinite energy is the same in all[20]."

NATURE OF FORCE

Now, this consciousness Force is certainly not the ordinary surface mental consciousness which, as the psychological researches have amply shown, is but an in significant part of the forces lying hidden in the deeper layers of the unconscious. Consciousness is not mental though man alone is self-conscious. Śaṁkara's analysis of deep sleep, differentiating between the Consciousness and the self-consciousness is very valuable here. The latter is only one aspect of the former, which is eternal and exists in all stages, waking, dreaming and sleeping. Epiphenomenalism is now an exploded theory: "Consciousness uses the brain, which its upwards strivings have produced, brain has not produced nor does it use the Consciousness[21]." Yogic feats and the modern researches in abnormal Psychology and hypnotism prove that the instruments are not indispensable to consciousness.

Again, this consciousness is present everywhere. The experiments of Sir J. C. Bose have proved the existence of consciousness in plants, on a strictly scientific basis and there is every

20. Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition. p. 88.
21. Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition. p. 103.

reason to hope that the same may be proved with regard to the metals, only if we could get more refined instruments. All science is based on the principle of "Non Fit Saltus in Natura". "Thought", as Sri Aurobindo points out, "has a right to suppose a unity where that unity is confessed by all other classes of phenomena, and in one class only, not denied but merely more concealed than in others[22]." Any thing, whose existence is required in the fitness of things, exists, if its existence is neither denied nor affirmed by facts. Pure reason has *a-priori* certainly of the ontological status of its conclusions. All knowledge, scientific or metaphysical can pass from known to unknown. Continuity is not opposed to real differences. A faith in the efficacy of such a leap is behind all speculative thought. This is the justification of Sri Aurobindo's conception of the existence of conciousness in all forms of the force working in the world.

SPACE AND TIME

Thus, "Space would be Brahman extended for the holding together of forms and objects. Time would be Brahman self-extended for the deployment of the movement of self-power carrying forms and objects; the two would then be a dual aspect of one and the same self-expression of the cosmic Eternal[23]." Status of Time is the eternity of the Eternal and that of space, the infinity of the Infinite. The three different states of Being with regard to Eternity are : the timeless eternity, the simultaneous integrality of Time and the Time movement. But all this is one Eternity. The Time and the Timeless, change and status are not events in time. The fundamental principles of existence are always present in the Eternal. Thus, according to Sri Aurobindo Space and Time are neither forms of intuition, nor absolute existents nor mere forms of relations. With modern four-dimensional theory of Space-Time, Sri Aurobindo conceives Space and Time as intervened like warp and woof. To supreme Truth consciousness, Time is an eternal present, a totemsimul and Space is an indivisible subjective extension. This theory does not contradict the Space-Time theory of modern Phy-

22. Ibid p. 106.
23. Life Divine. Vol. II. IInd Edition. p. 107.

sics but goes further then it. Theories of relativity and Quantum have amply exhibited that the last word to explain the construction of the rich world is not with Science. Heisenberg's 'principle of indeterminacy' has refuted the time old law of causality in science and replaced it by a calculus of probability. The same thing has been proved by Einstein in the field of macrophysics. Thus, modern physics arrives at the hypothesis of an energy-force whose ways are not mechanically determined. Alexander makes it the basis of his metaphysics. Sri Aurobindo advances upon it, and solves the difficulties of Alexander. He points out to an indefinable, infinite, timeless and spaceless absolute Existence, behind the infinite spatio-temporal world of science. With Tantra, Sri Aurobindo admits both Shiva and Kāli, Being and Becoming. He rejects both materialism and vitalism as equally onesided. Purusha and Prakṛiti, Brahman and Māyā are equally real aspects of the ultimate Reality. The theory of evolution shows, how the Nature which is unconscious in its primordial stage gradually evolves to conscious and self conscious levels. If Prakṛiti is perfectly non-intelligent, how can Mahat or Ahaṁkāra arise out of it ? Whatever evolves must be involved and hence the unconsciousness or non-intelligence of Prakṛiti is only a mask which it gradually unveils. According to Sri Aurobindo, the fundamental idea behind Sāṁkhya theory is the apparently contradictory nature of Soul and Nature but as he argues at length, dualism is not ultimate [24]. There is a unity between self and self, and between self and Nature and both are one in Absolute. Purusha and Prakṛiti can be related only if they are different aspects of the same reality.

But a negative monism is not the solution. *As againstt Śaṁkara's 'illusionism'*, Sri Aurobindo posits a "universal Realism." Like Śaṁkara he refutes the analogy of dream applied to explain the unreality of the world. Even the dreams are not unreal. They cannot be rejected on the ground of their negation by other conditions. The experience of Nirvāṇa as the Nihilists wrongly suppose, does not prove the unreality of the experironce of the world. Neither dreams nor life is unreal. To support his case, Sri Auro-

24. Life Divine. Vol. II. IInd Edition p. 67.

bindo advances a valuable analysis of dreams. Thus far, he agrees with Śaṁkara. But then he rejects the latter's notion of the unreality of the world from Pārmārthik point of view. The truth of status does not negate the simultaneous existence of change. There is no absolute gulf between the pragmatic and the spiritual truths though the latter is certainly higher than the former. Sri Aurobindo shows how the different analogies used by Śaṁkara, *e. g.* pots, double moon, silver and nacre, mirage, rope and snake etc. presuppose the existence of that which is superimposed on other and hence do not prove the unreality of the world. Mind constructs unreal mental images, only out of real experiences. The products of the real power of Real must themselves be real. As Sri Aurobindo says, "All that is in kinesis, the movement, the action, the creation, is the Brahman; the becoming is a movement of the being ; Time is a manifestation of the Eternal[25]." Iśwara as Creator of Māyā, world as real phenomena, individual as seeking liberation cannot be unreal.

Kant and Buddha are confined to reason, Śaṁkara retains the conflict between reason and intuition. Sri Aurobindo finds a place for reason in intuition itself. A world negating philosophy is not with the tune of time. The Philosophy of our age must find a solution of our problems here and now and should not explain them away by calling them unreal. The old wines of the eternal truth should be poured into new bottles of our age. It is here that Sri Aurobindo's theory of the world stands better than that of Śaṁkara and others. It not only solves the problems of metaphysics but also that of life, individual and social. The gulf between pragmatic and spiritual has been abolished. Physics discovers the realm of objects. Psychology explores the recesses of the subject and the behaviour of man. Metaphysics, to be worthy of its name should not negate them but affirm their truths in the light of a higher truth. Sri Aurobindo's philosophy does not contradict the truths arrived at by other branches of knowledge in our time but explains all of them as coherent in an integral view of Reality. Māyāvāda is an escape through cutting the knot, a solution, or a disentangle-

25. Life Divine. Vol. II. IInd Edition. p. 202.

ment. A true solution must account for the truth of God, world and individual and also reconcile them in an integral whole. In his theory of the world, Sri Aurobindo not only points the limitations of other theories but also accepts their truths. Taken exclusively from the standpoint of existence or consciousness or delight, the world is Māyā, Prakṛiti and Lilā respectively. Hence, to an integral view of the world, all these are simply various aspects of the truth. To Sri Aurobindo, the world is not only Māyā and Prakṛiti but also Lilā.[26]

THE TRIPLE MANIFESTATION

The universe according to Sri Aurobindo, is the result of the multiple concentration of the supramental consciousness. In Supermind, the creator, there is no distinction of knower, knowledge and known. The creation of physical, vital and mental out of this equable concentration is due to centralization, an unequal concentration of consciousness and multiple distribution of force in which there is the beginning of self division or of its phenomenal appearance. First of all the knower holds himself concentrated in knowledge as subject and regards his force of consciousness as is continually proceeding from him into the form of himself, working in it, drawing back in himself, and issuing forth again. Next, from this proceeds the division of knower knowledge and known, self, Māyā and becomings of self. After it, there is repetition of conscious soul in every form of himself. Now, so far the play of the Many is real. It is the creation of supermind. But thence forward the supermind uses mind as an instrument for creation. Hence, pursued a little further, the third status becomes the level of ignorance, that creates absolute divisions in things. Thus there are three general poises or sessions of the world founding consciousness of supermind. "The first founds the inalienable unity of things, the second modifies that unity

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26. "Lila, the play, the child's joy, the poets joy, the actors joy, the mechanician's joy of the soul of things eternally young, perpetually inexhaustible, creating and recreating Himself in Himself for the sheer bliss of that self creation, of that self representation Himself the play, Himself the representation Himself the play, Himself the player, Himself the Playground."
—*Sri Aurobindo. Life Divine. Vol. I. IInd. Edition.* p. 124.

so as to support the manifestation of the Many in One and One in Many; third further modifies it so as to support the evolution of a diversified individuality which by the action of ignorance, becomes in us at a lower level the illusion of the separate ego[27]." The first, however, is not the pure unitarian consciousness of Sachchidānanda, for that is beyond space-time and only potentially contains the universe. It is, on the other hand, an equal self extension of Sachchidānanda, all comprehending, all possessing, all constituting. But there is no individualisation. It is a real play of conscious being. All these three poise are only different ways of dealing with the same truth. The difficulties of the mutually conflicting theories of creation arise only due to their exclusive emphasis on either of these. Sri Aurobindo's conception of triune status of Supermind, establishes a happy synthesis of the theories of Advaita, Visiṣtādvaita and Dvaita. Here, it must be noticed that Sri Aurobindo differentiates between a higher and a lower Māyā, a higher and a lower Prakṛiti. The third status of individuality is not necessarily ignorance though ignorance may be a consequence of it. It is a sort of blissful dualism in unity which by a further action of the mind becomes an exclusive dualism of ignorance. The supermind proceeds by a double faculty of comprehensive and apprehensive knowledge. Proceeding from the essential oneness to the resultant multiplicity, it comprehends all things in itself, as itself, the One in its manifold aspects, and apprehends separately all things in itself as objects of its will and knowledge.

THE MOTHER

With Tantra and Shakti Philosophy, Sri Aurobindo calls, Divine Force, the Mother. She is the Consciousness-Force of Sachchidānanda and is far above the creation. In her triple poise as Individual, Universal and Transcendent, she mediates between man and nature, creates the universe and links it with the Supreme. There are four leading powers of this Force which Sri Aurobindo describes as the personalities of the Mother, *viz.* Maheshwari, Mahākāli, Mahālakshmi and Mahāsaraswati. As he

27. Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition, p. 177.

says, "Maheshwari lays down the large lines of the world-forces, Māhākali drives their energy and impetus, Mahālakshmi discovers their rhythms and measures, but Mahāsaraswati presides over their details of organisation and execution, relation of parts and effective combination of forces and unfailing exactitude of result and fulfilment[28]." Besides these four prominent powers, there are innumerable other powers, of the Mother. Our rich world is not a result of innumerable types of complexus of atomic quanta and bare energy. It is the creation of the universal Mother which not only governs from above but also descends here, both impersonally and personally. Thus, Sri Aurobindo brings in the working of the phenomenon of grace.

LILĀ

The fundamental purpose behind the world, if we may at all ascribe purpose to the Perfect Being, is the lila. As the aspect of existence has been emphasised in the concept of Māyā or that of consciousness-force in the concept of Prakṛti so from the point of view of delight the world is the lilā of Sachchidānanda. It is the eternal play of the Divine Purusha and the Divine Prakṛti, the immortal dance of Shiva and Kali. This is how Sri Aurobindo explained the why, the purposeless—purpose, the spontaneous self-manifestation of the Divine. The theories of Māyā and Prakṛti fail to explain the bliss aspect of the Divine. At the back of Māyā and Prakṛti is the Lilā of the Supreme. It is not an activity to fulfil some desire since then the Lord shall be imperfect, and yet it is not a meaningless play since this again defiles Sachchidānanda. The C eator is neither an imperfect individual nor an extra-cosmic deity. The world is lilā, the spontaneous overflow of divine consciousness, not by on effort of will but by the very nature of Him.

THE MANIFESTATION

The universe is a self concealment of Sachchidānanda to realise itself through its opposite. Sachchidānanda is infinite being, consciousness, self sustaining Force, Delight and Unity. In the

28. The Mother. p. 66.

universe; on the other hand, we find finite souls, limited consciousness, a chaos of atoms, a discordant rhythm of pleasure, pain and indifference and finally a discord of forces and beings. The two represent the different aspects of Him. Universe is the manifestation of the delight of Sachchidānanda to realise Himself in its opposite. All creation or becoming is nothing but this self manifestation.[29] The play of a child, or the self expression of a poet are neither purposive in the sense of a plan to achieve some end, hitherto unfulfilled, nor purposeless in the sense of being meaningless. The Perfect is not motionless. The motion is in it though it is not motion. It is static as well as dynamic. It is temporal as well as timeless. "The Absolute neither creates nor is created—in the current sense of making or being made; we can speak of creation only in the sense of the Being becoming in form and movement, what it already is in substance and status[30]." Thus, Sri Aurobindo escapes all the traditional objections agāinst a theory of creation.

SUPERMIND : THE CREATOR

Pantheism truly emphasises the immanence of God, Deism, His transcendence and Theism, His personality. But all these views are equally one-sided. God is not only immanent but also transcendent, not only personal but also impersonal. He is in the man as well as in the universe though these do not exhaust Him. Deism posits an unbridgable gulf between God and world. Pantheism identifies the two. Sri Aurobindo maintains the view of the world as manifestation of the Divine consciousness. The material form which appears to be in complete contrast with Divine is the fittest vehicle for manifestation since complete involution is possible only in the extreme opposite. The material form is real, since, "Whatever is created must be of it and in it and what is of the substance of the utterly real must itself be real[31]."

The creation of the finite by the Infinite presupposes a directing faculty, an active power which brings out particular phenomena out of infinite possibilities. This, however, is not mind. Berkley's

29. Sri Aurobindo Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition. p. 184.
30. Ibid. p. 47.
31. Life Divine Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 22.

formula of esse-est-percipi does not explain the real world. Logical sequence is not always the true representation of ontological order since logic itself changes with different levels of experience. From the fact that an object is not known to exist before it is perceived, it does not follow that perception constitutes the essence of things. Again, a universal mind, as Green suggests, is a misnomer. Mind is merely a mirror which reflects the truths. It can present truths only when it works in close collaboration with actual facts of experience. An infinite mind would create a world full of the defects of mental creation. Hence, in contrast to the Creative Idea of Hegel, Sri Aurobindo, prefers to call it "Real-Idea", which according to him, is "a power of Conscious Force expressive of real-being, born out of real being and partaking of its nature." Sachchidānanda is not Absolute Idea. It is not only existence and consciousness but also bliss.

The intermediate link between Sachchidānanda and universe, knowledge and ignorance, according to Sri Aurobindo, is the Supermind. As he says, "we call it Supermind or Truth-Consciousness because it is a principle superior to mentality and exists, acts and proceeds in the fundamental truth and unity of things, and not like the mind, in their appearance and phenomenal divisions[32]." It is a logical necessity for the transition from Timeless and Spaceless to that which is in Time and Space. It is a knowledge-will or Consciousness-Force. It is the dynamic aspect of Sachchidānanda Himself. It is the self-knowledge and self-force of God.

According to Sri Aurobindo, what we can be aware of, is, first the indivisible One ; secondly, the diffusion of all that was concentrated in its unity and, thirdly, its firm self extension in the Truth-Consciousness which contains and upholds the diffusion and prevents it from being a real distintegration. This is the Supermind, the Truth-Consciousness, the Real-Idea, which knows itself and all that it becomes. Thus Supermind is between the One and Many, the unitary consciousness and the mind. It is fourth to That in its descent and fourth to us in our ascent. Sri Aurobindo

32. Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition. p. 174.

arrives at this concept of Supermind by his own direct experience of Truth-Consciousness, its comparison and contrast with mental consciousness and finally by the references from the vedas and upanisads. Supermind is not supracosmic[33]. According to Sri Aurobindo the seers before him had no definite idea of Supermind. Kṛishna the Lord in Gita was only an Overmind Deity. Thus in the grades of consciousness Supermind is much higher than Brahman of the traditional vedānta.[34]

Supermind is the divine gnosis whieh creates, governs and upholds the worlds. In it there is no conflict between ideas, will or force since all are related to one consciousness. The Supermind is the Creator. It is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, all inclusive, all prevading and the Lord within. In it there is no distinction of knowledge, knower and known. It is the seat of all trinities. How this Supermind creates the universe, or directs evolution, we shall discuss in the next chapter.

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33. "The Supramental and Supracosmic are not the same."

—*Sri Aurobindo. Letters. Ist Series.* p. 104.

34. "I entered the Brahman-Consciousness in three days, but for the Supramental it took a deeade."

—*Sri Aurobindo. Vide—Mother India. August 1952.* p. 6.

CHAPTER VII
THE EVOLUTION

"All Evolution is in essence a heightening of the force of consciousness in the manifest Being so that It may be raised into the greater intensity of what is still unmanifest, from matter into life, from life into mind, from the mind into the Spirit."

—*Sri Aurobindo. Life Divine, Vol. II. Part II.* p. 658.

Evolution is too potent a fact to stand in need of any more proof. The anti-evolutionary arguments of men like Oswald Spengler, have now become out of date. The theory of evolution has been adopted in almost all fields of human knowledge. In the field of Philosophy itself, several types of theories have been advanced, which require critical treatment to arrive at a theory consistent with reason as well as justified by expsrience in all its fullness. "Evolution" according to Lloyed Morgan, "is the name we give to the comprehensive plan of sequence in all natural events[1]." But to make the plan truly comprehensive the definition should be pushed further to include the events of mind as well as Spirit. The theory of evolution should find the sequence and purpose of all the levels of existence, matter, life, mind and Spirit and also speculate the future course of the process consistent with its general scheme. It is in this context, that we propose to examine different theories of evolution, before finally assessing the value of Sri Aurobindo's approach.

MECHANISTIC THEORIES

CHARLES DARWIN

Charles Darwin is the greatest exponent of the mechanistic theory of evolution in the field of Biology. The keynotes of his theory are the doctrines of 'struggle for existence' and 'survival of the fittest.' Different kinds of living beings arise from a common

1. Emergent Evolution p. 1.

parent stem by mechanical adaptation to different types of environment. The essential causes of variations are the differences inherent in the gene borne by the individual and not the experiences or behaviour of the individual in the course of his career. The influence of environment, according to Darwin acts indirectly, that is by elimination of those characters which are not suitable for the particular environment and the consequent automatic retention of the useful charcters. Thus, small and insensible changes occur and the gradual accumulation of such changes during long periods give rise to wide differences among the different branches which once originated from the same stock.

Recent researches in hereditary mutations, like that of Weismann have, however, demonstrated that the changes in one generation are not transferred to another through heredity. The mutations, on the other hand, are sudden, a fact which indicates the truth of emergence in evolution. Strictly speaking, the evolution, to bear the name, must be emergent. A mechanical evolution is a contradiction in terms. Novelty in value presupposes emergence. Another great flaw in Darwin's theory is the missing of the links between various levels, thus causing wide gaps and breach of continuity which Darwin has failed to bridge inspite of all his collection of data. This also goes to prove in favour of emergence which retains continuity inspite of novelty. Again, the linear process of evolution may explain the phenomena of physical levels but not that of others since each level has its own laws. Finally, mechanism does not explain the why of evolution, which is a necessary requisite for any sound theory. The formula of the survival of the fittest is only one side of the picture since in life, love, cooperation and sympathy are equally fundamental facts along with struggle and strife.

HERBERT SPENCER

Herbert Spencer bases his philosophical theory of evolution on mechanistic hypothesis. He seeks to explain every level of existence in terms of mechanical integration and diffusion of energy force.

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2. "Each plane has its own truths".

—*Sri Aurobindo. Lights on Yoga.* p. 5.

Matter is indestructible, motion is continuous. Persistence of force is the ultimate primary truth. In Nature, there is a constant redistribution of matter and motion. The entire universe is involved in the double process of evolution and dissolution. Evolution implies the integration of matter and the dissipation of motion. Dissolution involves the absorption of motion and the disintegration of matter. In evolution, the matter passes from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity. The retained motion, during this process undergoes a parallel transformation. Spencer supports this hypothesis with illustrations from every region of Nature and all departments of mental life. When the evolution reaches an impassable limit, it automatically gives place to dissolution and thus the cycle goes on.

Such a mechanical procedure, however, lacks all teleology and is insufficient even in the field of matter and life. To define life as the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external ones, is to miss the real purpose of Nature behind all its apparently unpurposive movement. Force, to explain the mental and spiritual phenomena, must be a Spiritual force, whose movement is more complex than mere mechanical integration and diffusion.

EMERGENT EVOLUTION

SAMUAL ALEXANDER

All finite beings, according to Alexander, are "in some sense complexes of space and time." Time is the nisus inherent in the very structure of Space-Time. The activity of Time on Space causes the emergence of the finite motion. By a further grouping of finite motions there emerge, "collocation" or "constellation of motions" of some degree of complexity, creating matter with primary qualities. Matter with secondary qualities emerges by a further complexity generated in motion patterns. Again, by a further differentiation and complication of motion in matter possessed of primary and secondary qualities, emerges life. Finally, Mind emerges in a living organism of higher degree of complexity. But, Mind is not the last to come, since there is no reason why evolution should stop with it. From Mind emerges Deity and from Deity, Deity of Deity and so on ad infinitum. It must be

noted that Alexander often takes Deity to mean the ideal evolute.

Now, the first difficulty which arises in such a theory is about the what of the evolution. Space-Time does not explain all the levels. If every new value emerges simply by a mechanical complexity in Space-Time, the evolutes are not qualitatively different and remain mere resultant. A thing which is completely reducible in terms of another, is certainly not higher than it, however complex it may be. All explanation of the higher by the lower is a precise inversion of the truth. Again, whatever evolves must be involved. Conscious cannot evolve out of unconscious, unless it is invoived in it. The primordial force cannot be unconscious since then it cannot be the matrix of the entire universe in which we find not only matter but also life and mind and other higher planes of existence. Alexander's Space-Time is a mere blank from which nothing qualitatively different can emerge. Irreversibility of the process cannot be maintained with the mechanical explanation of everything in term of Space-Time. How can the unconscious principle of Time be the impetus to the emergence of higher evolutes like mind or Deity? Again, matter alone proceeds in a linear way. The movement of consciousness mental or spiritual, is through contraction and expansion, ascent and descent.

A. N. WHITEHEAD

"Existence", according to Whitehead, "is activity" and the world of reality is organically one. His approach is naturalistic like that of Alexander, though he tries to explain the entire process of the world in terms of life and mind and interprets the lower in the light of the higher. Thus the inorganic nature is the potential embodiment of life and mind and moves towards their attainment. The purpose of the entire process, Whitehead calls "Creativity" and describes as "the universal of all universals. "The Creative advance", as Whitehead calls it, "is the application of this ultimate principle of creativity to each novel situation which it originates[3]". Even God is described as, "the primordial, non-temporal accident" or creativity. Universe is constituted of

3. Process and Reality. p. 28.

actual occasions or actual entities, *i. e.*, the smallest bits process. These actual occasions are, however, every time dealt with in novel ways. Hence, "Creativity is the principle of novelty[4]." Creativity and actual occasion create the entire world after the possible forms called "eternal objects" which are "potential, non temporal entities." The eternal objects are pure potentials of the universe[5]. According to the different kinds of actual entities, Whitehead differentiates between subjective and objective kinds of eternal objects. Thus, the eternal object enters or descends into the actual entity to form a particular object or feeling. This process, Whitehead calls, "ingression". The term "ingression", according to him, "refers to the particular mode in which the potentiality of an eternal object is realised in a particular actual entity, contributing to the definiteness of that actual entity[6]."

The process of evolution is constantly expanding. Through every actual entity, the world perpetually perishes and recreates itself. The movement of the creativity is like that of a snowball which swells as it grows from centre to circumference. Like the growth of an organism, the progress is not individual but on a cosmic scale. Whitehead does not believe in mechanism. "None of the laws of Nature give the slightest evidenee of necessity.[7]" The only truth, observable on cosmic scale is the fact of creative advance with the aim of the enjoyment of self-creation by the emergent entity.

Whitehead brings in God to answer why. Though every actual entity is guided by its own subjective purpose, yet on a cosmic scale God is the ultimate principle and directing force. Hence, he is called the principle of limitation or "the principle of concretion[8]." Again, God is also the substratum of the eternal objects. "The nature of God is the complete conceptual realisation of the realm of ideal forms[9]." God is not only a creator but also a companion of the world. The world emanates from God and is also enjoyed by Him. God and world both evolve together side by

4. Ibid.
5. Ibid. p. 208.
6. Process and Reality. p. 31.
7. Nature and Life p 67.
8. Process and Reality. p. 345 and 488.
9. Religion in the Making. p. 138.

side. Neither God nor the world reaches static completion. Both are in the grip of ultimate metaphysical ground, the creative advance into novelty. Either of them, God and the world, is the instrument of novelty for the other.

But, the relation of God with the world is not the relation of world with the God. The world may depend upon God but by that it does not follow that God depends upon the world. As Sri Aurobindo points out, "World lives by That, That does not live by the world.[10]" Whitehead looks to the evolution from the point of view of beginning and not from that of end.[11] Again, the evolution of God together with that of world exhibits a dualism which even the metaphysical ground of creativity fails to bridge. When the world is an emanation of God; the multiplicity merely represents His different aspects. The theory of creation stands in need of modification and the purpose of evolution to be more clearly defined. The Infinite Himself cannot be the direct creator of the universe of finite things since His direction of the incoming of a certain particular eternal object in a particular actual entity presupposes a directing faculty. The distinction between a primordial and a consequent God does not serve this purpose. Again, the various levels of evolution are not clearly distinguished. It seems as if the process of evolution stops at the human level, a notion for which Whitehead advances no reasons. Further, inspite of the valuable idea of ingression, there is no integration of the lower in the higher, which is a necessary postulate for any theory of evolution which believes that the process swells as it grows. The relation of Creativity, God and the world, remains shrowded in mystery. The principle on which God directs any particular eternal object to descend into an actual entity is not clear and hence the why of the evolution remains unexplained. To sum up, Whitehead exhits a deep insight into the problem of evolution by his conceptions of evolution and involution, ingression, growth in advance, direction by God, creativity, etc. but the whole thing requires a subtler distinction and a greater integration.

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10. Life Divine, Vol. I. Second Edition. p. 28.
11. See ; S. K. Maitra—The Meeting of the East and West in Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy. p. 429.

CREATIVE EVOLUTION

Evolution, according to Bergson, is neither mechanistic nor teleological but creative. All things are various manifestations of life impulse, the 'elan vital' as Bergson calls it. "Vegetative torper, instinct and intelligence," are the three main tendencies in the evolution of consciousness. These three, however, do not exhaust all the possibilities. These other possibilities have not been so successful as the three mentioned above. Again, the evolution involves progression as well as retrogression. The evolutes are novel and cannot be predicated *a priori*. The world swells as it advances and grows continuously without repetition. The fundamental characteristics of the process of evolution are continuity, indeterminateness and creativity. Bergson rejects both mechanism as well as finalism. The theory of creative evolution claims to account for unity and harmony by supposing one original impulse at the back of all and for novelty, diversity and discord by supposing the spontaneous disruption of the same principle. It is a definite improvement upon the previous theories and Bergson has ably supported his thesis by elaborate illustrations from the facts of biology. In abolishing the gulf between matter and mind the conception of life as the matrix of evolution goes further than that of Space-Time. Life is consciousness struggling to overcome the impeding and determining influence of matter and expressing itself in creative activity.

But since life, as distinguished from Spirit, is only one type of manifestation, the creative evolution of Bergson leaves much out of its ken. Life may be a mediating link between matter and mind but to explain both it must transcend both and also integrate them, which is clearly impossible. The explanation of the entire scheme of evolution simply with reference to the vital impetus is an over-simplification of the process which does not explain the why of the rich universe very much more than the mechanistic theories. God as elan-vital is immanent and suffers with the world but such a God is merely a process, a becoming and hence imperfect. Teleology is not explained unless force becomes a force of 'Being.' Again, a complete indetermination lacks all purpose and arrives at a

Philosophy of pure chance. In Bergson's theory the process is determined by vital impetus but the impetus, without any goal to achieve, seems to be a mere blind impulse which does not account for harmony in the world. Self-manifestation of God cannot be the goal since God is Himself in process. Again, is there any relation between the higher and the lower levels? If no, then all continuity is broken, if yes, then what is the nature of this relation? A truly creative evolution need not be indeterminate though determination may not be mechanical but vary according to the need of the cosmic purpose. The higher, to have any relation with the lower, must integrate it within itself since if it merely annuls it the two remain unrelated. Bergson's analogy of a snow-ball which swells as it grows finds a place for loose synthesis but not for true integration which is the exclusive privilege of the spirit. To explain the facts concerning all the levels of existence the primary matrix should be such as possesses everything in it potentially, expresses them, integrates them and transcends them all in its higher synthesis and finally evolves by its own inherent impetus.

LLOYED MORGAN'S THEORY

Llyoed Morgan tries to arrive at a sort of synthesis between the Spencerian-Darwinian theory and the theory of creative evolution. He seeks to preserve both continuity as well as novelty, the resultant as well as emergent principles. The lower depends on higher and yet the higher is absolutely new. Morgan's approach is purely naturalistic. Hence, the first basal thing which he finds is space-time continuam, full of physical events related extrinsically so as to form matter. When they are intrinsically related they form life. At a still higher level, *e. g.*, human body, another kind of relatedness supervenes among the living physical parts and consciousness emerges. We have then a mind-life-matter system. Consciousness is always with life and life always with matter. Thus, Morgan introduces the valuable idea of the involution of the higher in the lower, though the mode of action of any continuam will depend on the particular stage at which it happens to be. The lower depends on higher. How matter and life would act at

the conscious level depends on consciousness. Morgan acknowledges God as the ultimate "directive activity" behind the entire pyramid of emergence. He reaches the physical world by following "downwards the line of involution" and God, by following "upwards the line of dependence[12]." Again, while events within the pyramid of evolution are caused and determined, God is free and ultimate. To explain the purpose of evolution, Morgan points out to the creativity of God, which is behind all happenings.

Morgan's explanation of emergence with reference to chemical change is inadequate, since it can only apply to material plane. Similarly, the explanation of the emergence of value with reference to the simple formula of organisation in individual, is a gross missing of the nature of values. Values, according to Morgan specially belong to mental level and only a mind or spirit can account for their emergence. Such a view arrives at a subjective conception of values. Value is indefinable, unique and *sui generis*. It cannot be explained in biological, psychological or mechanical terms. Morgān's confusion of the axiological with psychological exhibits his naturalistic bias. In Morgan's scheme, if the principle of evolution is pushed to its logical extreme, we do come to some such conclusion that matter is God involved and yet Morgan with his naturalistic bias seems to arrive at the contradictory position that God is evolved matter. If God's creativity is the cause of all this, then not organisation but God's delight is responsible for the process of evolution. Again, the principle of integration has not been recognised, without which continuity of the lower in higher remains unexplained. The explanation of matter, life and mind in terms of different types of organisation of relations is not consistent with the imposition of the creativity of God. It appears that the creativity of God is at best an alien graft on Morgan's naturalism and the gulf between naturalism and Divine impetus remains unbridged.

DIALECTICAL EVOLUTION

Hegel—As we have already pointed out in our treatment of dialectical method, evolution, according to Hegel progresses

12. Emergent Evolution. p. 133.

through thesis, antithesis and synthesis. With the identification of history and logic, Hegel seems to explain the purpose in Nature with reference to thought's nisus towards the whole. Thought moves through opposites in which it cannot rest and hence the contradiction every time leads to a further synthesis. Now, if taken in the sense of a fundamental urge to grow, this hypothesis is really valuable to explain much of the physical, biological and mental evolution but as a model of thought-process it cannot account for the entire scheme of thc universe since there the integration is as important as synthesis and distincts as real as opposites. To fit the entire process of evolution in the fixed rhythm of thesis, antithesis and synthesis is to arrive at some sort of mechanism, which cannot explain the evolution of the real world. Perhaps Bergson was more wise in leaving the process open. Dialectical process cannot explain the what, how or why of the real evolution since the matrix of the real world is something more comprehensive, complex and integrated than thought, abstract or concrete.

Croce—In place of the triple rhythm of Hegel, we find in Croce a two-fold degree, the second degree depending on and not opposing the first. Thus the practical depends on theoretical, economic on moral. Like Hegel he identified History with Philosophy and Reality with concrete thought. The history of spiritual advance according to Croce does not consist of mere succession of spiritual activities. There is not only evolution but greater and greater inclusion in progress.[13] Thus evolution presupposses involution and the higher includes the lower. Knowledge issues forth in action which is involved in it.

Croce considerably improves upon Hegel by his theory of distincts and the concepts of involution and evolution but in leaving the basis of contradictories, his scheme of evolution loses all impetus for further movement even in the field of thought. Again, by accepting the first triad of Hegelian dialectic in which Being and Nothing are synthesised in Becoming, Croce accepts Becoming as the whole of Reality, a position which we have amply

13. Wildor Carr—The Philosophy of Croce. p. 13.

criticised in our treatment of Bergson. There seems to be a truth in critic's contention that Croce does not improve much on Hegel and wherever he tries to differ he falls in inconsistencies.

INTEGRAL EVOLUTION—SRI AUROBINDO

The Process.—The origin, the continent, the initial and the ultimate reality of all that is in the cosmos, according to Sri Aurobindo, is the triune principle of transcendent and infinite Existence, Consciousness and Bliss which is the nature of Divine Being. Consciousness has two aspects, illuminating and effective; state and power of self-awareness and state and power of self-force, by which Being possesses itself, whether in its static condition or in its dynamic movement. In its creative action, it knows through omnipotent self consciousness all that is latent within it, produces and governs the universe of its potentialities by an omniscient self energy. This creative action of the All-existent has its nodus in the fourth, the intermediate principle of Supermind, the Real Idea, in which a divine knowledge, one with self-existence and self-awareness and a substantial Will which is in perfect unison with the knowledge, because it is itself in its substance and nature that self-conscious self-existence, dynamic in illumined action, develop infalliably the movement and form and law of things in right accordance with their self existent Truth and in harmony with the significance of its manifestation.

Mind, life and matter are triple aspects of these higher principles working in subjection to the principle of Ignorance. "Mind is a subordinate power of Supermind which takes its stand in the standpoint of division actually forgetful here of the oneness behind, though able to return to it by reillumination from the supramental; life is similarly a subordinate power of the energy aspect of Sachchidānanda, it is Force working out form and the play of conscious energy from the standpoint of division created by Mind; Matter is the form of substance of being which the existence of Sachchidānanda assumes when it subjects itself to the phenomenal action of its own consciousness and force[14]."

14. Life Divine. Vol. I. IInd Edition. p. 318.

MATTER TOO IS BRAHMAN

Berkley's doctrine of *esse est percipi*, Kant's epistemological analysis or Bergson's concept of platonisation do not prove that matter is a mental creation. Epistemological priority of mind is no guarantee for ontological priority. The earth existed long ago before there was mind to perceive it. Due to the same reasons again, matter is not a creation of universal mind. But since the universe is created by consciousness force, as we have proved in the preceding chapter, substance or matter is only a form of spirit. It is a conceptive self extension of being which works itself out in the universe as substance or object of consciousness and which Cosmic mind and Life, in their creative action, represent through atomic division and aggregation. Spirit is the soul of matter, matter is the body of spirit, yet matter has also certain fundamental characteristics in contrast to Spirit. Firstly, it is the culmination of the principle of ignorance. Secondly, it is the culmination of bondage to mechanical law, a colossal inertia, which opposes all that seeks to liberate itself. And finally, it is the culmination of the principle of division and struggle. Matter is the last stage known to us in the progress of pure substance towards a basis of Cosmic relation in which the first word is not spirit but form. And if there is an ascending series in the scale of substance from matter to spirit, it must be marked by a progressive diminution of the characteristics of matter and a progressive increase of the opposite characteristics which will lead us to the formula of pure spiritual self extension. Between the two poles of matter and spirit, form and essence, ignorance and knowledge, there is a possibility of infinite gradation. Even within the matter, there is an ascending series which leads us from the more to the less dense, from the less to the more subtle.

LIFE

Life according to Sri Aurobindo, "is a form of the one Cosmic Energy, a dynamic movement or current of it, positive and negative, a constant act or play of the force which builds up forms, energises them by an unceasing process of disintegration and

renewal of their substance[15]." Disintegration and renewal, status and change, birth and death, all are the processes of the same life. "All renews itself, nothing perishes" is the law of the conservation of energy. Life is everywhere, secret or manifest, organised or elemental, involved or evolved. It is universal, all pervading and imperishable, only its forms and organisings differ. Each form is constantly taking into itself and giving out again the breath and energy of the common force. There is no essential difference between the life in plant, animal or man. Everywhere we see the same birth, growth and death; nutrition, productiveness and sterility, sleep and waking, energy and depression of life dynamisms, the passage from infancy to maturity and reaction to stimuli. The force is fundamentally the Chit-Tapas or Chit-Shakti of the Vedānta. It manifests itself as nervous energy full of submental sensation in the plant, as desire-sense and desire-will in the primary animal forms, as self-conscious sense and force in the developing animal and as mental will or knowledge in man.

THREE STAGES OF THE EVOLUTION OF LIFE

Thus, life is a universal organisation of conscious-force acting subconsciously in matter. In this operation, there are three stages, material life, vital life and mental life, the sub-conscious, the conscious and the self-conscious. The lowest is that in which the vibration is still in the sleep of matter, entirely sub-conscious, so as to seem wholly mechanical. The middle stage is that in which it becomes capable of a response still sub-mental but on the verge of what we know as consciousness. The highest is that in which life develops conscious mentality in the form of a mentally perceptible sensation which in this transition becomes the basis of the development of sense or mind and intelligence[16]. Life is an intermediate link between matter and mind. It is not a separate entity or movement like mind, but has all conscious-Force behind it in every one of its workings and it is that conscious-Force alone which exists and acts in created things.

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15. Life Divine. Vol. I. IInd Edition. p. 213.
16. Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition. p. 225.

Life proceeds through three stages. In its primary form it is a divided and subconscient will, the physical energy of physicists, which is under control of mechanical forces that govern the interchange between the form and its environment. In its final form, it attains an equipoise which increases as it evolves towards conscious mind. In the middle are death, desire and incapacity, which lead to the struggle for survival, for a status of satisfaction and security towards expansion, mastery, possession of self and the conquest of environment. Alexander failed to see that the life principle subordinates the mechanical and hence cannot be explained as a mere complexus of Space-Time. Darwin in his exclusive emphasis on the play of aggressive instincts in life forgot that it was only one aspect of life. As life evolves towards Mind and still more as Mind evolves towards Supermind and Spirit, the instincts of self-assertion, self-preservation and aggression are gradually subordinated to love, co-operation and mutual help which in their turn are gradually more and more refined, universalised and spiritualised. Darwin's theory does not explain the facts of mental and supramental levels. Even in the field of life it operates only in the middle stage, the stage of death, desire and incapacity and not in the Ist or the IIIrd stage which, though apparently a contradiction and opposite of the first, is really the very fulfilment and transfiguration of it. Atom, is the prototype of division, since it resists the process of dissolution by aggregation. In the second stage of life, the physical basis of the vital ego is dissolved and there is interchange, inter-mixture and fusion of being with being. In the third stage, the self affirmation of the individual goes with the impetus for mutual adaptation, interchange and fusion. This is due to the increasing effect of the mind whose law, as contrary to that of physical life is enrichment through giving, self fulfilment through self-sacrifice. Subconscious will, the second term in the original status of life, becomes hunger and desire in the second status, which are transformed and fulfilled by the growth of love in the third status of life. In physical life, there is no desire to give but as the love grows with the passage through the various stages of life and mind, giving becomes more important than receiving.

THE MIND

As we have already given a detailed description of Śri Aurobindo's conception of Mind in the preceding Chapters, here we would deal with it only briefly. Mind in its essence is a consciousness which measures, limits, cuts out forms of things from the indivisible whole and contains them as if each were a separate integer. It conceives, perceives, senses things as if rigidly cut out from a background or a mass and employs them as fixed units of the material given to it for creation or possession. If it goes beyond and tries to conceive a real whole, it loses itself in a foreign element, where it can neither perceive nor conceive or sense. Mind is an instrument of finitization. In the original consciousness, however, there is no ignorance but a subordinate process of delimitation. Hence, the mind is only a subordinate and not really a separate working of the Real-Idea.

CHAPTER VIII

THE EVOLUTION (*Contd.*)

"Instead of a mechanical, gradual, rigid evolution out of indeterminate matter by nature—force we move towards the perception of a conscious, supple, flexible, intensely surprising and constantly dramatic evolution by a super-conscient knowledge which reveals things in matter, life and mind out of the unfathomable inconscient from which they rise.

—*Sri Aurobindo. Evolution.* p. 4.

FROM MIND TO SUPERMIND

But mind takes up the work to continue and not to complete it. Thus, as against the theories of Spencer and Darwin, Sri Aurobindo's is an open evolution like that of Bergson and Alexander. The impetus, however, now becomes more rapid and smooth since as contrasted to the previous evolution in ignorance, now it progresses in knowledge to higher and higher heights till it may reach the Sachchidānanda. The vast difference between the nature of mind and Supermind presupposes grades between them, otherwise all ascent or descent is highly improbable. There are, of course, radical changes in the transition from matter to life and life to mind, yet due to slow gradations they are rendered conceivable and feasible. The hiatus between Mind and Supermind is greater. As we rise beyond Mind, there takes place a large dynamic descent of light, knowledge, power, bliss or other supernormal energies into our self of silence.

HIGHER MIND

Higher Mind is a mind of large clarity of spirit, a luminous thought—Mind, a mind of spiritual conceptual knowledge. "An all awareness emerging from the original identity carrying the truths, the identity held in itself, conceiving swiftly, victoriously, multitudinously, formulating and by self-power of the idea effectually realising its conceptions, is the character of this greater mind

of knowledge.[1]" In Higher Mind what we know is the totality of things though not an integral knowledge. It is the self-revelation of an eternal knowledge. It can freely express itself in single ideas but its most characteristic movement is a mass ideation, a system or totality of truth-seeing at a single view. The relations of idea with idea, of truth with truth are not established by logic, but pre-exist and emerge already self seen in the integral whole. Besides the cognitive aspect, we have the volitional as well as the effective aspect of the Higher Mind. It purifies, delivers and creates through knowledge. Heart and life become conscious of the idea and respond to its dynamisms. Feelings, will and actions become the vibration of this higher wisdom. The idea works even in the body so that the potent thought or will of health replaces its faith in illness and its consent to illness, or the idea of strength calls in the substance, power, motion, vibration of strength. The idea generates force-form proper to it and imposes it on our mind, life and matter.

ILLUMINED MIND

The descent of the Higher Mind, does not integrate but only prepares the base for the descent of a yet higher power, the Illumined Mind. This is a mind of spiritual light, a luminous inner force and power which effects almost a violent impetus of rapid transformation in comparison with the slow and deliberate process of the Higher Mind. Thought is here subordinated to vision which catches the truth itself and not merely its image. "As the Higher Mind brings a greater consciousness into the being through the spiritual idea and its power of truth, so the Illumined Mind brings in a still greater consciousness through a Truth-sight and Truth-light and its seeing and seizing power.[2]" As Higher Mind transforms and fulfils the thought so the Illumined Mind transforms and fulfils vision. It can effect a more powerful and dynamic integration. It brings a spiritual insight into the heart and a spiritual light and energy into its feeling and emotion. It imparts to the life-force a spiritual urge that dynamises the action and exalts life movements. It infuses into the sense a direct and total

1. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 788.
2. Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition. p. 334.

power of spiritual sensation so that our vital and physical being can contact the Divine in all things. It throws a transforming light on the physical mind, which breaks its limitations, inertia, narrow thought power and doubts.

INTUITIVE MIND

Both Higher Mind and Illumined Mind depend for their authority on a yet higher power, the Intuitive Mind. It does not work through cognition or vision but through intuition which we have elaborately described in Chapter III. It transforms not only mind but also heart, life, senses and even body. It changes the whole consciousness into the stuff of intuition, for it brings its own greater radiant movement into will, feelings and emotions. It recasts the life and body in the light and power of truth.

OVERMIND

Beyond intuitive Mind is the Over-Mind which is the Super Mind's delegate to the Ignorance. A line divides Super-Mind and Over-Mind but it permits a free transmission. In Over-Mind, there is no integrality of the Supermind and yet it embraces the totality. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "What to the mental reason are irreconcilable differences present themselves to the Overmind intelligence as coesistent correlatives; what to the mental reason are contraries are to the Overmind intelligence complementaries[3]." It proceeds through an illimitable capacity of separation and combination of the powers and aspects of the integral and indivisible all-comprehending unity. Thus in Overmind we have the origin of the cleavage and yet the superstructive is still founded on the basis of an implicit underlying unity. All possibilities of combination and relation between the separated powers and aspects are freely organised here. Thus, it gives Sachchidānanda the character of a teeming of infinite possibilities which can be developed into a number of worlds or thrown together into one world.

Again, as contrasted with mind, Overmind Consciousness is global in its cognition and can hold any number of seemingly fundamental differences together in a reconciling vision. The

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3. Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition. p. 339.

Overmind is a sort of inferior Supermind although it is concerned more with pragmatic truth than with absolutes, is more global than integral. In Overmind alone we realise a true harmony of the whole, which is not possible to mind. In contrast to mental Māyā of Ignorance, the Overmental Māyā is of knowledge. The cosmic mind on this plane comprehends its own unity through intellect and not through experience. There is no interpenetration in its unit but only co-existence. It is a partial knowledge and not a true and integral self and world knowledge. And yet as contrasted to human mind, here remains a harmony, a power of communication and mutuality and a freer play of mentality. Its ignorance is limitative but not necessarily falsificative.

The change brought through intuitive Mind is completed in Overmental descent. This requires not only vertical but also horizontal expansion of consciousness. At this level, thought, feeling and emotion all become cosmic, all embracing, catholic, infinite and spiritual. It takes up all that is in the three steps below it and raises their characteristic workings to their highest and largest power, adding to them a universal wideness of consciousness and force, a harmonious concert of knowledge, a more manifold delight of being. But Overmind, cannot transform the entire Nature nor does it guarantees against the downward pull of inconscience. Hence, to achieve a complete integral transformation of the entire nature the descent of Supermind is imperative. Supermind, we have already described in Chapter VI.

NOT A RIGID SCHEME

This, however, is not a clear cut, logical and rigid account of the spiritual ascent, since, "When the higher descends into the lower consciousness, it alters the lower but is also modified and diminished by it; when the lower ascends, it is sublimated but at the same time qualifies the sublimating substance and power[4]." Thus, inspite of the fact that ascent is only possible when the lower level is completely integrated, Nature is not a logical series, like Hegelian dialectic, but a totality of ascending powers which interpenetrate and effect each other. Hence, different interme-

4. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 807.

diate forces and beings are created and complete integration under any one power becomes difficult. Sri Aurobindo describes Overmind by the analogies of an ascending ocean, a tide or a mounting flux the leading fringe of which touches the higher degrees of a cliff or hill while the rest is still below, or "an army advancing as columns which annexes new ground while the main body is still behind in a territory over-run but too large to be effectively occupied so that there has to be a frequent halt and partial return to the traversed area for consolidation and assurance of the hold on the occupied country and assimilation of its people[5]. Hence, at each stage the higher parts of the nature may be provisionally but incompletely organised in the new consciousness while the lower as in a state of flux. Higher level appears when the lower is sufficiently integrated for the new emergence, yet it is only after the emergence of the higher and their influence that the lower is perfectly organised. This intricate action takes place because each descending power by its intensity of pressure on the nature uplifts it to hihger levels. Again, the process is further complicated due to the very nature of integration which requires not only ascent but also descent. This descent is resisted and distorted by lower nature and hence the higher does not wait for the complete transformation of the first level of descent but goes on descending, partially transforming all so that we find that "Nothing is accomplished untill all is accomplished[6]." Finally, in individual evolution there is further complexity due to the fact that all the levels of consciousness are not transformed equally and simultaneously, since the inner changes more readily than the outer. Again, a perfect transformation of man is possible, when not only the inner but the outer, the circums conscient also, should be spiritualised. This is not possible unless the entire Nature is spiritualised since the circumconscient is constituted not only by us but also by the environments. But once the supramental principle and its cosmic operation, are established permanently, the intervening powers of Overmind and Spiritual Mind can found themselves securely upon it and reach their own perfection. They would become in the earth-

5. Ibid. p. 808.
6. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 809.

existence a hierarchy of states of consciousness rising out of mind and physical life to the supreme spiritual level. This is what all religions have dreamt as the kingdom of heaven upon Earth.

THE TWO HEMISPHERES

This entire chain of evolution is divided into two hemispheres, the higher and the lower. A line is drawn between the higher half of the universe of consciousness, (parārdha), and the lower half, (aparārdha). The higher half is constituted of Sat, Chit, Ānand, Mahas (the Supramental), the lower half of mind, life and matter. This line is the intermediary Overmind which though luminous itself, keeps from us the full indivisible supramental light. Thus, the two hemispheres meet at the junction of mind and Supermind. The rending of this veil, the ascent of the lower into higher is the crux of the problem.

ASCENT OF MAN

Evolution begins with the involution of Sachchidānanda in Matter. Hence, it is the gradual emergence of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss through higher and higher forms. Existence first appears in Matter. Consciousness first appears in vital and then in mental life. The emergence of man is the turning point in evolution. Physical man, vital man and mental man are the evolutionary steps of Nature towards the emergence of spiritual man. In the spiritual man, Nature has to make a fresh ascent. It is different from the past process in two respects. It requires a conscious effort of the human mind and extends the man in-wards, outwards and upwards, to psychic self, world and God. Here, the ignorance is radically transmuted into knowledge. This, however, may not be an ascent en masse, but a general admission of the ideal, widespread endeavour and conscious concentration are indispensible. The foundation of this new change shall be the integral consciousness.

Thus, in Sri Aurobindo's scheme of evolution, there is not only ascent but also *transformation* and *psychicisation*. "Psychicisation," according to Sri Aurobindo, "means the change of the lower nature bringing right vision into the mind, right impulse and feeling into the vital, right movement and habit into the physical-all turned

towards the Divine, all based on love, adoration, bhakti-finally the vision and sense of the mother everywhere, in all as well as in the heart, her force working in the being etc. faith, consecration, surrender[7]." The evolution of the inner psychic being is the central note of all yoga and human evolution. This psychic being is the true-self, the real individual within man. Thus the evolution is also inner. It is cosmic as well as individual. But psychicisation, alone, is not sufficient for complete transformation which requires the descent of Supermind. It is only then, that ignorance is completely transformed into knowledge. This supramental descent and the consequent evolution of Superman we have described in Chapter X.

MECHANISM AS WELL AS EMERGENCE

Sri Aurobindo's evolution admits both mechanism and emergence, determinism and freedom. The universe is the All Existent pouring himself out in His own conceptive extension of Himself as Time and Space by means of an infinite force of Existence, and in its own nature of Bliss. The creator is Supermind but it is a power of Sachchidānanda. Hence, the process of evolution is free, self imposed and self determined by Sachchidānanda; since He is absolute and infinite, the truth of things and has a boundless capacity of determining Himself in innumerable forms of knowledge power and will. Divine is free and yet not arbitrary[8]. The world is not the result of a blind chance but a self-manifestation of the Ultimate. This is the secret behind the comprehensibility of the incomprehensible world by the laws of Science. Matter is inconscient only in appearance since it is a state of complete involution of consciousness. Nature's processes appear to us mechanical, only because the purpose is under disguise. Nothing is created from outside, everything gradually manifests out of consciousness force. Since the Existence is closely related to Consciousness in Divine, we notice a close relation between the quality and quantity

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7. Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual No. 6 August 1947. p. 41.

8. "The Divine also acts according to the conditions of the game. He may change them but he has to change them first, not proceed, while maintaining the conditions, to act by a series of miracles."

—*Sri Aurobindo. Quoted in 'Mother India'. December 1952.* p. 62.

in Nature. The Real-Idea contains everything potentially. This is the reason why a tree comes out of a seed. Sri Aurobindo firmly believes in teleology. "Thing that is made is attracted towards thing that is, becoming towards being, the natural to the supernatural, symbol towards thing in itself, Nature towards God[9]." As consciousness is involved in matter we find hereditary traits in gene. This again, is the basis of the mind-body relation which Sri Aurobindo explains with reference to the one underlying consciousness under both. Matter is a stage in the evolution of spirit, while mind is only a higher stage. The higher can determine the lower and not the vice versa. Body itself can be spiritualised. Again, the element of chance in Nature is explained by the emergence of the consciousness through its opposite. The process always rises to higher and higher emergent qualities. "...........what emerges is greater than that in which it emerges, as Mind is greater than Matter, Soul than Mind, Spirit, most secret of all, the supreme emergence, the last revelation, is the greatest of all[10]."

ETERNITY AND CONTINUITY

Evolution, according to Sri Aurobindo, is not a fact in time. The divine does not descend in matter at a particular date. It is eternal and seen as temporal succession only due to the inherent limitation of the intellect. "The emergence, the movement from the Immutable is an eternal phenomenon and it is only because we can not conceive it in the beginningless, endless, evernew moment which is the eternity of the Timeless that our notions and perceptions are compelled to place it in a temporal eternity of successive duration to which are attached the ideas of an always recurrent beginning, middle and end[11]."

The evolution is continuous. It always has a past, a present and a future till spirit is completely manifested. Sachchidānanda is Himself behind everything and hence where one principle is manifest in cosmos, there all the rest must be not only present and passively latent but secretly at work. The progress is not by leaps and gaps.

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9. Sri Aurobindo.—Sri Aurobindo Mandir Annual. No. 11. p. 23.
10. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 71.
11. Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition. p. 92.

The manifestation of the spirit is a complex weft in which all the others enter as the elements of the spiritual whole. Thus, everyone is involved in each. As Matter is the last word of the descent so it is also the first word of the ascent. Whatever is involved must evolve. As the power of all these planes, worlds, grades, degrees are involved in material existence, so are they all capable of evolution out of it.

ASCENT AND DESCENT

The impetus in evolution is twofold, the nisus from below and the pressure from above. Thus the purpose of deliverance is helped by the pressure of the supramental planes on the material, compelling it to evolve out of it, their involved principles and powers. When the evolution of the lower comes to a point suitable for the emergence of the higher, there is a pressure from superior levels, a descent which assists the lower in its ascent to a higher level. This emergence of higher levels gives the lower a new value. This is not possible in mechanistic theories since there the lower plane can only passively receive and not turn contacts into values. This heightening, deepening, subtler, finer and richer intensification of all parts is the way of the Spirit and hence not possible in the theories of material, vital or mental evolution.

INTEGRATION

Thus, in integral evolution, there is a development of triple character. An evolution of the forms of matter, more and more subtly and intricately organised to admit the action of a growing, complex and subtle organisation of consciousness is the indispensable physical foundation. An upward evolution from grade to higher grade, an ascent, is the evident spiral line which the evolution must describe. A taking up of what has already been evolved, into each higher grade as it is reached and a transformation so as to admit of a total changed working of the whole being and nature is equally necessary. This should lead to integration. Unlike Nietsche's conception of the emergence of the new out of the ashes of the old, integral evolution the force of consciousness is gradually heightened in the manifest being lead-

ing to the emergence of various evolutes, never annulling any but integrating all in its spiral movement. In the case of man's ascent out of the sevenfold ignorace to sevenfold knowledge, our mental, physical and vital existence need not be lessened and impaired by being spiritualised, but they can and do become richer, greater, more powerful and more perfect. In their divine change they break into possibilities which in their unspiritualised condition could not be practicable or imaginable.

MANY WORLDS

This integral evolution is not merely confined to the material world. There are other higher planes which play their part in the process. Spirit should be capable of basing its manifestation on the mind or the life principle and not only on the principle of Matter. Therefore, it is not illogical to conceive the existence of the worlds of mind and worlds of life. There may even be worlds founded on a subtler and more plastic, more conscious principle of Matter. Now, what is the evidence of the existence of these worlds? What is their nature and their relation with the material world? The demand of a physical proof for supraphysical worlds is invalid by the very nature of the case. They can influence us only indirectly and we know them through subtle sense-contacts, mind contacts, life contacts and contacts through subliminal, etc. This experience cannot be rejected on the possibility of error since this is possible even in the case of physical senses. The experience, however, may be of widely different types, *viz.*, physical, vital, mental, spiritual, subliminal, etc. The psychological or logical arguments employed to deny the existence of supraphysical worlds, are equally applicable to the physical. In these worlds, we find full play of their respective grades in the process of evolution. Hence, they are not only steps in evolution but also coeval levels which exert their pressure on the process of terrestrial evolution as well as on the life of man.

THE WHY OF EVOLUTION

Sri Aurobindo explains the why of the evolution in terms of the delight of Sachchidānanda. Brahman manifests in the world

to enjoy its self manifestation in the figures of relative and phenomenal consciousness. "Brahman is in this world to represent itself in the values of life.[12] This question of why does not arise in the theories of Alexander, Bergson, Sāṁkhya or Darwin, where the original matrix is conceived to be non-intelligent, since there all movement is due to the inherent nature of the primordial stuff. But, as soon as we accept with Sri Aurobindo, the existence as conscious Being the question arises as to why at all—He manifests Himself. Now, a conscious existence presupposes an inherent freedom to manifest at will. Delight can be the only adequate reason for its indulgence in movement and form. According to Sri Aurobindo, "All illimitableness, all infinity, all absoluteness is pure delight[13]." All things are terms of Sachchidānanda. The term delight does not signify what we understand by pleasure or happiness, whose enjoyer is essentially limited and imperfect. Delight of being is universal, illimitable, self-existent and not dependent on particular causes. It is the background of all backgrounds from which pleasure, pain and other more neutral experiences emerge. When delight of being seeks to realise itself as delight of becoming, it moves in the movement of force and itself takes different forms of movement, of which pleasure and pain are positive and negative currents. Subconscient in matter, superconscient beyond mind, this delight seeks to realise itself in life and mind by emergence in the becoming. Its first phenomena are dual and impure. They move between the poles of pleasure and pain. But it aims at its self-revelation in the purity of a supreme delight of being which is self-existent and independent of objects and causes. Just as Sachchidānanda moves towards the realisation of universal existence in the individual and of the form exceeding consciousness in body and mind, so it moves towards the realisation of universal, self-existent and objectless delight in the flux of particular experiences and objects. Delight is the reason of that clinging to existence, that over mastering will to be, which is found in the instinct of self-preservation, and the imperishability of matter. On the mentāl plane, it mani-

12. Life Divine. Vol I. Second Edition. p. 44.
13. Life Divine. Vol. I Second Edition. p. 110.

fests as the sense of immortality, which attends the formed existence through all its phases of self-development and of which even the occasional impulse of self destruction is only a reverse form. "Delight is existence, Delight is the secret of creation, Delight is the root of birth, Delight is the cause of remaining in existence, Delight is the end of birth and that into which creation ceases.[14] "The delight of existence is at first self-gathered, absorbed, subconscious in the basis of the physical universe; then emergent in a great mass of natural movement which is not yet what we call sensation. With the growth of mind and ego, it further emerges in the triple vibration of pain, pleasure and indifference originating from the limitation of the force of consciousness in the form and from its exposure to shocks of the universal Force which it finds alien to it and out of harmony with its own measure and standard. Finally, there is the conscious emergence of the full Sachchidānanda in its creations by universality, by equality, by self possession and conquest of Nature.

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL, PAIN, ERROR AND FALSEHOOD

Such a hypothesis is, however, challenged by the existence of evil, pain, error and falsehood. Can the Divine create evil and falsehood in His pure delight ? If yes then, how is He different from Devil ? If no, then, how these phenomena are to be explained ? When all this is Divine, then He himself must be the cause of all this. But then, how is Deity on the side of goodness ? The problem cannot be avoided by simply calling it an in-explicable mystery since God is All-Knowledge. The imposition of a Beelzebub, Creating all these in rivalry to God would make the Divine finite and impotent.

In contrast to the extreme views of an absolute denial of evil or a complete affirmation of it, Sri Aurobindo accepts the reality of evil, without allowing it any absolute status. He looks to this problem from three aspects, *viz.*, from the side of Absolute, world and individual respectively. Falsehood and evil are the creations

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14. Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition. p. 101.

of ignorance and hence as such have no place in Supreme Nature which is perfect knowledge. As soon as ignorance gives place to knowledge, evil and falsehood disappear. So far as knowledge is authentic it is true since as Sri Aurobindo says, "Authenticity is a first step towards absoluteness.[15]" Human values like truth and error, good and evil are relative and uncertain. This is all due to intermixture of true and wrong consciousness, the one producing good and the other evil. In the presence of the divine force of integral Being, even the physical pain and suffering shall not exist. Thus, good and evil are not mutually interdependent any more than light and darkness, though the latter nevertheless depend on the former. Where there is unity and mutuality of consciousness these phenomena of error, evil and falsehood do not exist even in multiplicity and diversity. Hence, Sri Aurobindo says, "There is, therefore, no authentic inevitable cosmicity of falsehood and evil even as there is no absoluteness; they are circumstances or results that arise only at a certain stage when separativeness culminates in opposition and ignorance in a primitive unconsciousness of knowledge and a resultant wrong consciousness and wrong knowledge with its content of wrong will, wrong action and wrong reaction.[16]"

ORIGIN OF THESE PHENOMENA

Now, at what stage these contraries arise in cosmic manifestation? To what level of existence do they belong? Are these inevitable in creation? Sri Aurobindo endorses the ancient belief that there are corresponding powers, being and forces behind these contraries. Modern developments in science do not challenge this possibility. Man can be directly aware of them by going deep in his subliminal. They have often a tremendous influence. But this immeasurableness cannot be an argument to prove their absoluteness. Absolute evil and pain defeat their own purpose. Either they get extinguished or turn into their opposites. As Sri Aurobindo points out, "Self-existence in essence or by an eternal inherence in the self-existent, 'is the condition of absoluteness, error, falsehood, evil are cosmic powers but relative in their

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15. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 372.
16. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 375.

nature, not absolute since they depend for existence on the perversion or contradiction of their opposites and are not like truth and self-existent absolutes, inherent aspects of the supreme self-existent.[17]" Thus, these are not cosmic principles but originate only in the return of the Inconscience towards consciousness.

Evil, however, does not belong to matter. Nature has no place for moral values. It is only by the contact of conscious beings and for them alone that values come into existence. The duality begins with conscious life and emerges fully with the development of mind in life. The vital mind, the mind of desire and sensation, is the creator of the sense and fact of evil. The moral values again, are purely human, though they are not by that means, unreal. Ethics is an indispensable step in the process of evolutionary Nature.

Thus, the first source of good and evil is the vital. This is the basis of the hedonistic theories in ethics, psychological, evolutionary or ethical. This again, may be egoistic or altruistic, individual or social. Besides vital, we may get valuations based on thinking mind which give rise to such theories as that of rationalism, intuitionism, moral sense, aesthetic sense and the law of Karman, etc. Others support ethics on religious basis. Behind all these theories, there is a deeper feeling variously named as conscience, inner voice, or psychic being. The real sanction according to Sri Aurobindo, is inward spiritual and psychic.[18]

The phenomena of evil and falsehood come into existence into the surface emergence of the mental and vital consciousness out of the Inconscience. This is determined by two-fold conditions. Firstly, the inner force has to impose itself on the outer for the emergence of mental through the difficult medium of overlying layer of nescience. Then, emerges life which is in constant conflict with the downward pull of matter. This life again has to struggle with the environment for its survival and as the mind grows it takes the form of a constantly self-affirming mental, vital and physical ego. Consciousness, at first sight appears to be entirely alien to matter, but still the facts of animal and human life lead

17. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 380.
18. Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition. p. 384.

us to the conclusion, that there is a concealed consciousness in things which gradually comes to the surface. The individual animal, at first, gets knowledge through instincts and then by perception and sensation. This is only possible when there is the same underlying subliminal consciousness behind subject and object. It is hence that the secret consciousness is rendered into surface sensation and perception, the secret force into surface impulse. If this subliminal may come to the surface, a direct knowledge is possible but it does not happen because of the pressure of the inconscience and also because the evolutionary purpose is to develop slowly through an imperfect but growing surface awareness. By a gradual evolution, the life as well as mind attain their characteristic nature separating it from other elements. But with this evolution the possibility of the error also grows. This is restricted only so long as intuition plays a dominant role. But, this is not the actual case since in nature, the Inconscience gradually comes to ignorance and ignorance grows to knowledge through partial knowledge. Hence, the mental stage is a necessary step. There is a double source of error in the surface-mind's distorting the intuition received from inner consciousness and again, the knowledge based on that is further erroneous. Hence, error is a necessary step in the transition from ignorance to knowledge. To shut out error is only possible if we limit the chances of the acquisition of knowledge. Error does not necessarily amount to falsehood. It may, on the other hand open to fresh knowledge in unexpected directions. The egocentrism of the mind is another source of falsehood and error. The limitation due to the inherent nature of the individual is often a source of error and falsehood. This is true not only in the field of cognition but also of feeling and will. A wrong consciousness is created out of ignorance and leads to wrong actions. In the absence of some power, the vital force is the chief means of the effectuation of Nature. When this is replaced by the true vital being the life force becomes a true servant of the soul. To sum up in the words of Sri Aurobindo, "........a limited consciousness growing out of nescience is the source of errors a personal attachment to the limitation and the error born of it the source of falsity, a wrong consciousness governed

by the life-ego the source of evil.[19]" When the individual ego does everything for its own interest as a separate ego, discord and disharmony with others arises and the result is wrong and evil. The sense of this evil and good has an evolutionary purpose since it leads man to transcend his present stage into some Good that is eternal and infinite.

PURPOSE OF EVIL

But, what is the purpose of this consciousness of evil? According to advaitins, it leads to the negation of the world and ends in escapism. Buddhists base their doctrine of Nirvāna on the fundamental fact of suffering. But according to Sri Aurobindo, it is the very necessity of the evolution itself. As Prof. S. K. Maitra aptly puts it, "It is a problem relating to how and not to why.[20]" Sri Aurobindo would agree with Keats in conceiving the world as a veil of soul-making. The entire presence of evil and falsehood is for the purpose of the evolution of spirit in and through its extreme opposites. This psychic intuition may sometimes not correspond to mental reason but still it has a deeper sense of the higher light. The psychic perception is certainly beyond good and evil though not in the sense of instinct, but in the sense of the higher law. The realisation of the evolutionary purpose of Nature is the crux of the problem. All ethics, art, science, religion, philosophy and finally, all yoga is the attempt at the achievement of this end. How far this end is achieved by religion, we would examine in the next Chapter.

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19. Life Divine. Vol. I. Second Edition. p. 402.
20. Vide—The Meeting of The East and West in Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy. p. 139.

CHAPTER IX

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

"..............For religion is that Instinct, Idea, Activity? Discipline in man which aims directly at the divine, while all the rest seem to aim at it only indirectly and reach it with difficulty after much wondering and stumbling in the pursuit of outward and imperfect appearances of things."

—*Sri Aurobindo. Human Cycle.* p. 214.

Now, before we take up out final theme of yoga and human evolution, we wish to pause for a while, to examine the nature of religious experience and its significance for the achievement of the evolutionary purpose in Nature. This digression is necessary because like Philosophy, Religion too has been acclaimed as an important avenue of the realisation of Ultimate Reality; and since we maintain that both Philosophy and religion are equally necessary on mental level, though as we transcend mind both these may give place to their future successors, the supramental knowledge and the supramental delight of integral yoga. The aim of the present philosophical discussion on the nature of religious experience is to enquire into the essential truth of religion, to see how far reason goes in this particular realm, and to assess its moral, psychological and spiritual value in the attainment of evolutionary purpose.

HEGELIAN APPROACH, (PRINCIPAL CAIRD)

It is the Hegelians who have most strongly emphasised the value of reason in religion. Hegel placed Philosophy above religion and art. According to Principal Caird, "Whatever is real is rational, and with all that is, rational Philosophy claims to deal[1]." He does not deny the limits of reason but points out that these limits have been imposed by reason itself[2]. Those who absolutely exclude reason from the field of religion must advance

1. Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion. p. 2.
2. Ibid. p. 4.

reasons for doing so. Again, the very fact that reason limits itself, also shows that it transcends the limit. There is nothing above reason. Hence, whatever is suprarational, in the sense of being beyond reason, is irrational or non-sensical. Caird does not mean that religious experience is a matter of logical deduction. In religion, there is no ignorant wonder, blind submission and paralysis of thought before an insoluble enigma, but an intelligent admiration, love and assurance that the realm of infinite is open to us and that to know God is to acquire an eternal life. Philosophy presupposes religion and makes no claim to produce it. Feeling is a necessary element in religion, though this feeling must be clearly distinguished from others, through reason. Not intensity of feelings, but an intelligent basis and coherence in the organic whole, is the criterion of true religion.

According to Caird, "it is not possible for one and the same consciousness to be purely relative and conscious of its relativity[3]." Such a statement is valid so far as it points out to the element of infinite in man, but the identification of Universal Consciousness with mental consciousness, only exhibits confusion. Again, Caird derogates intuition in his enthusiam for reason. The significance of a direct knowledge of God is not fully realised when it is argued that, "as in order to the attainment of a relation between the two terms there must be a third term by which they are mediated, it follows that immediate knowledge must virtually include a process of thought; that is, it must include all that is objected to in mediated or rational knowledge[4]." The fundamental error underlying such a view is the confusion of consciousness and self-consciousness. Self presupposes not self, only for its consciousness as a subject, otherwise it shines in its own effulgance even in dreamless sleep and unconscious states. Consciousness of God is not unconsciousness, nor a consciousness of an object, but an indentification of essence with essence.

Caird fails to distinguish between various grades of intuition, when he says, "that which distinguishes between true and false,

3. Ibid. p. 16.
4. Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion. p. 47.

irrelevant and significant intuitions cannot be mere intuition but must be some higher principle.[5]" This higher priniciple is no other than spiritual intuition, the coherence in which decides the truth of any particular intuition. Reason fails to judge the truth of even the physical and vital intuitions of animals. Spiritual intuition is certainly not without reason, since it is based on the principle of integration and coherence, yet it is more than reason. It includes also the effective and conative aspects of our being. While saying, "What lies beyond reason in this sense is simply the irrational or non-sensical,[6]" Caird indentifies the suprarational with unknowable, as if mind is the only instrument of knowledge. It sometimes does appear, that what Hegelians understand by reason is not intellectual reason alone. But the use of the same concept for widely different phenomena only breeds confusion. Reason does not include conative and effective aspects and hence cannot be a fit instrument for religious experience which is attained through our whole being.[7] The critorion of the validity of any experience is not its logical consistency but authenticity. Not reason but spirituality is the essence of all religion.

PRAGMATIC APPROACH (WILLIAM JAMES)

The criterion of the truth of any particular religious experience, according to Pragmatists, is its workability, its pragmatic value for life. "God is real since He produces real effects.[8]" Says William James. Religious faith brings with it much vital good for the individual. Faith is scientific, critical and self-verifying. Its choice is living, unavoidable and momentous. The sceptic loses much due to suspension of belief. In religion, says James, "We are supposed to gain even now, by our belief and to lose by our non-belief, a certain vital good.[9]" God satisfies the whole of our being, the mind, heart and will. "At a single stroke, it changes the dead blank it of the world into a living thou with whom the whole man may have dealings.[10]"

5. Ibid. p. 55.
6. Ibid. p. 58.
7. "Religion is a matter of total concern".
—*William. E. Kennick. The Philosophical Review. January 1956.* p. 68.
8. Varieties o Religious Experience, p. 507.
9. The Will to Believe. p. 26.
10. Reflex Action and Theism. p. 126-7.

About the nature of the object of religious experience, James has a Catholic approach characteristic of a pragmatist "Each of us must discover for himself the kind of religion and the amount of saintship which best comports with what he believes to be his powers and feels to be his truest mission and vocation.[11]" Though the essence of religion is universal, the form changes according to the individual needs, because "evidence for God lies primarily in inner personal experiences.[12]" Kant subordinates religion to ethics. James subordinates religion to life. Religion is a biological and practical necessity. Complete mystic, according to Bergson, participates in the creative activity of God, without any material obstacles for "the super abundance of vitality which it demands flows from a spring which is the very source of life.[13]" Religion is on a par with mental therapeutics. Both science and religion are equally effective keys to unlock the treasuries so valuable to man's life.

Pragmatic approach has its truth in the fact that religious experience is not only super-normal but refines, developes, integrates and spiritualises the vital, physical and the mental aspects of man. And yet religion is not a mere means to life, nor a sort of safety valve to provide an outlet for extra biological energy. The reality of God does not depend on the effects that it produces in the world though they may be good arguments to convince some common-place persons. On the other hand, it is the reality of effects which depends on their being caused by God. By reducing God to mere means both James and Kant equally miss the true nature of Divine. Higher explains lower. Spirit explains life. God explains man. Not life but God, is the summum bonum. The broad-Characteristics of religion, pointed out by James, are only its casual results. God is loved for Him and not for any wordly good. Social utility is merely a bye-product and not the essence of religion. Religious man seeks no reward through religion, even if it may be immortality. True love and complete surrender, the acme of higher religion, do not wish any thing in

11. Varieties of Religious Experience. p. 368.
12. Pragmatism. p. 109.
13. Two Sources of Morality and Religion. p. 198.

return. The sole concern of the devotee is giving, sacrifices, surrender and identity with the object of worship. The overt similarities between science and religion do not prove either the identity of methods or ends. The essence of religious experience cannot be detected by collection of data, its classification and comparison and formation of some general hypotheses, nor is it the common element of various types of religions. In religion, the end explains the beginning. The purpose of mystic union with God is a direct experience of the Divine inflatus and not to secure more vitality for life.

NATURALISTIC APPROACH (J. H. LEUBA)

In collaboration with his master James, says Prof. Leuba, "God is not known, he is not understood, he is used[14]." Thus Prof. Leuba also emphasises on the pragmatic and biological aspect of religion. Religion, according to him, is an anthropopathic behaviour of man. As a pschologist, he draws freely on sociology, anthropology and psychology. His is a typically utilitarian-naturalistic view. The essence of religion according to him, is the satisfaction of certain fundamental needs. As he points out, "To realise the presence of the God of love is the mystic's method of securing the satisfaction of his essential wants[15]." Everywhere man seeks gratification of his desires. Only in religion, he fulfills them in what he calls Divine or God or some other supreme power. Nothing else is new in religion and hence no new categories are required to explain this particular type of human behaviour. As ascientist Prof. Leuba applies the law of parsimony and explains religion in terms of life. Religion implies a belief in a great and superior psychic power, whether personal or impersonal and a dynamic relation formal and organised or otherwise, between man and some higher power resulting in increase of life. Man requires religion because the needs of life are not only physical but also spiritual.

In his book on religious mysticism, Leuba has given an elaborate psychological analysis of mystic phenomena such as methods,

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14. Vide—Monist, July 1901.
15. The Psychology of Religious Mysticism. p. 120.

motives, presence, trance, leviation, etc., but everywhere he denies their ontological significance. God of mystics is not the real Absolute of Philosophy. "The direct address characteristic of rituals of every existing religion would no longer be possible should the gods of metaphysics replace the God of religions[16]." But rituals do not constitute the essence of religion. Again, if the God of religion is not ultimate Reality, all religious worship is merely a make—belief, an auto-suggestion, or at best a psychological process of mind cure. God's grace and mercy do not cause Him imperfection. Leuba's conception is riddled with anthropomorphism.

Leuba does not wish to denounce religion or to diminish its value for human life. He rightly hopes that, "Religion and Science would work hand in hand for the production of a better and happier, a diviner-man[17]." But, it is difficult to understand how such a hope may be fulfilled; religious experience is merely a make-belief without any objective basis. It appears sometimes that Leuba is only against the traditional view of a personal God and not the Divine itself. But in trying to make religion scientific, Leuba missed much of its essence. Religion seeks a personal union, a direct communion with some other. The phenomena of grace, love, worship, sacrament, etc., which are closely knit around the personal aspect of God are too valuable to be discarded. The interpretations of religious experience, as advanced by Prof. Leuba, suffer from Psychologist's fallacy. Only a religious person having first hand direct experience of God as well as a perfect training in Psychology can give a true account of religious experience. The essence of religion cannot be understood by mere biographical study or observation of the mystics. Human language is too inadequate to describe these higher experiences. The symbols and imagery used by mystics, if taken in their literal meanings, are bound to derogate religion to any common place. The physical and vital imagery widely used by mystics, does show that the physical as well as vital parts of man are strongly affected by religious experience, but that

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16. Ibid. p. 304.
17. The Psychology of Religious Mysticism. p. 318.

must not obscure the higher elements which remain unexpressed. Though externally unconscious in divine trance, the mystic is spiritually more conscious than ever, since the experience continues to be the most valuable memory which guides him to march with an evergreen hope to that unknown though not unknowable land. Again, if, "For the psychologist who remains within the province of science religious mysticism is a revelation not of God but of man[18]," it only exhibits the limitations of the methods of science in the field of religion. The explanation of the mystic trance as "a succession of mental states which grow more and more simple and end in total unconsciousness," simply exhibits ignorance. Leuba, no less than his master James, admits the difference between mystics and psychopaths, but while using the same categories to describe widely different type of experience, he often comes perilously near reducing the religious phenomena to mere psychopathic behaviour or at the most, not more than psychotherapy, the purpose in both being the enrichment and enhancement of life. What Leuba analyses is only a primitive lower form of religion and mysticism, but as Principal Caird rightly remarks, "In religion it is not in the beginning, but in the end that we must look for the true origin and explanation of its history[19]." Again, Leuba confuses the idea of God with His reality. His explanation at best touches the fringe and not the focus of religious experience.

PSYCHO - ANALYTIC APPROACH (SIGMUND FREUD)

Psycho-analysis has strongly affected almost all psychological explanations of religious experience. According to Freud, religion has important relation with the historical incident of the murder of the tribal father in ancient times and the consequent sense of guilt ; resulting in the re-establishment of the Father in the shape of a most magnificient, all powerful God to whom men surrender as a token of acceptance of their guilt and in hope of getting extiation. In his "Totem and Taboo," Freud traces the psychological development of the religion of totemism. This is the historical beginning of religion. This totem is soon replaced by God. God was first

18. The Psychology of Religious Mysticism. p. 316.
19. Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion. p 332.

half-animal, half-man. After it, He was conceived as a powerful man. Religion gradually passed from polytheism through henotheism to monotheism. "Only then," as Freud points out, "the grandeur of the primaeval father restored, the emotions belonging to him could now be repeated[20]."

Freud traces religion to the ambivalence of father-son relationship. As he says, "Thus religion would be the universal obssessional neurosis of humanity. As in the case of the child, it originated in the Oedipus complex, the relation to the father[21]." The feeling of guilt of the original sin manifests in various forms of moral purism, asceticism, escapism, hatred of flesh and innumerable devices of self control and tormentation of body, It was to deliver men of this guilt that Jesus gave his life at the cross.

Freud calls religion an illusion. As he says, "Thus we call a belief an illusion when wish-fulfilment is a prominent factor in its motivation, while disregarding its relation to reality.[22]" Such a view, however, does not apply to higher forms of religions, though Freud will not admit a religion based on philosophical truths. Now, if the traditional so called religion be the object of Freud's criticism there is nothing to dispute, but as one goes through the pages of the "Future of an illusion", one finds him denouncing religion as such. He paints in gay colours the picture of a society without religion, established purely on scientific grounds. "The more the fruits of knowledge become accessible to man, the more widespread is the decline of religious belief, at first only of the obsolete and objectionable expressions of the same, then of its fundamental assumptions also".[23] In these words Freud clearly rejects all religion. Such a view is based on the assumption of the antagonism of religion and science. Yet, not many thoughtful persons have seriously discarded religion. The conclusion of his "Future of an Illusion," seems out of date, when Freud says, "No, science is no illusion. But it would be an illusion to suppose that we could get anywhere else what it cannot give us." The ex-

20. Moses and Monotheism. p. 210.
21. The Future of an Illusion. p. 76.
22. Ibid. p. 55.
23. Ibid. p. 62.

planation of the origion of the higher values of human life has been specially inadequate. Genesis is not a criterion of validity. Even if religion originates in the return to the repressed wish for father, or a sense of guilt, that is no argument against its value for spiritual regeneration of man, nor against the reality of its object. The history of religion clearly shows a development, an evolution to its more and more subtle forms. As religion grows in spirituality, it becomes more and more free from dross. Freud's explanation is an over-simplification of the phenomena. The philosophical, ethical and even the higher emotional aspects have been either missed or explained away.

Freud's approach is too analytic, utilitarian and pragmatic. As he says, "There is no appeal beyond reason. And if the truth of religious doctrines is dependent on an inner experience which bears witness to that truth, what is one to make of the many people who do not have that rare experience[24] ?" Though the rejection of via-negative is in tune with the consciousness of our age, the denial of the truth of mystic intuition is unwarranted. Reason, whether in science or philosophy, works on the fundamental postulates which are supplied by intuition and of which the most comprehensive is the mystic one. Mysticism is the acme of all religion. We only need to universalise it.

MORALITY AND RELIGION

According to Pringle Pattison, "A proposition which affords no inference that affects human life or can be the source of any action or forbearance seems a credo hardly worth contending for[25]." He emphasises on the primacy of moral will and the objectivity of moral value. As contrasted to this view, Alexander points out that though primarily, morality and religion were not distinguished, the difference between them is as much as between Philosophy and Physics. In our experience in the world, we find moral man to be non-religious and religious man to be not always moral. According to Bradley, morality to achieve its goal, transcends into religion. "It is a moral duty not to be moral, [26]" runs the paradox

24. The Future of an Illusion. p. 49.
25. The Idea of God. p. 24.
26. Appearance and Reality. p. 436.

and this is "the duty to be religious.[27]" Alexander rejects this view and appeals to the religious instinct itself. "There is in fact no duty to be religious any more than there is a duty to be hungry[28]." The religious sentiment is given in our constitution. Religion is spontaneous. In it, there is no more conflict and struggle. But both morality and religion are equally indispensable steps in the evolution of spirit. Morality is essentially rational. Religion is supra-rational Hence religion is a-moral though not immoral. God is on the side of goodness but not bound by moral laws. In religion there is no "ought" but grace. As Sri Aurobindo rightly says, "Some one was laying down that God must be this or that or He would not be God. But it seemed to me that I can only know what God is and I do not see how I can tell Him what He ought to be.[29]"

THE INTEGRAL APPROACH OF SRI AUROBINDO

THE ROLE OF REASON IN RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Sri Aurobindo defines true religion as "the following of the spiritual impulse in its fullness," and spirituality as "the attempt to know and live in the highest self, the divine, the all embracing unity and to raise life in all its parts to the divinest possible values.[30]" Thus coherence in spiritual experience is the criterion of the truth of religious experience. It may be pointed out, that coherence is a principle of reason and Sri Aurobindo admits that there is always an element of reason in supra-mental. But, this reason is transformed and integrated in the harmony of spirit. The application of intellectual reason to religious experiences will only breed misunderstandings. The questionings of the intellect about the validity of religious experience are simply based on ignorance of this particular phenomenon. The demand for physical proof of the existence of God or the efficacy of religion is quite contrary to

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27. Ibid. p. 441.
28. Space-Time and Deity. Vol. II p. 406.
29. The Advent Vol. IX. No. 4. p. 223.
30. The Renaissance in India. p. 80.

its spirit which is essentially spiritual and supra-physical.[31] Apart from its outward machinery of creed, cult, ceremony and symbol, the inmost essence of religion, is the search and finding of God. The object of religion is achieved through self-transcendence, absolute consecration, aspiration and experience, revelation, inspiration and intuition, etc. The delight of God-realisation is ineffable. The devotee has to surrender his entire being. The way of religion is absolute. "Its work is a sincere living out of the true and intimate relations between man and God, relations of unity, relations of difference, relations of an illuminated knowledge, an ecstatic love and delight, an absolute surrender and service, a casting of every part of our existence out of its normal status into an uprush of man towards the Divine and a descent of the Divine into man.[32]"

Sri Aurobindo does not reject reason in the field of religion but only limits and subordinates it. Reason cannot prescribe laws to religious experience, divine love, delight or action of the devotee. Its sole legitimate sphere is to explain the truths, the experiences, the laws of our supra-rational and spiritual existence in its our language. Sri Aurobindo emphatically supports the need of a Philosophy of Religion. Religious truths must be presented in an intellectual form.

As against the supra-rational, reason has its supremacy in the field of infra-rational. This is the region of instincts, impulses, sensations, crude emotions and vital activities. Religion includes the lower nature and specially in totemism nature-worship, fetish-worship and other primitive types of religions, it is the satisfaction of this lower nature which is mostly sought. In this early stage of religious development, there is much impurity, ignorance and superstition. It is here that reason can intervene to enlighten, purify, and rationalise the play of instincts and impulses. But, in its endeavour to purify the infra-rational aspect of religion, reason sometimes tries to eliminate it absolutely. The so-called reformed

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31. "Strictly speaking "Proof" exists nowhere outside mathematics. There is no proof (accurately speaking) in empirical science: there is only progressive verification and substantiation. In Philosophy of religion it has, it is true, been a custom to speak of "Proofs" or "demonstrations" of the existence of God. This is certainly scholastic language."
—*L. A. Reid. The Hibbert Journal October. 1955.* p. 14.

32. Human Cycle. p. 160.

religions often lack in wealth of spirituality, fullness of emotion and are impoverished, bare and cold. The sources of religious experiences are below or above. The life breath of religion is its supra-rational faith and infra-rational elements. No religion lives by its reasonings. Again, religion is not only personal but also communal and hence it must contain infra-rational elements. To affect the common man it must appeal to the whole being, not only to the supra-rational parts but also to all the others.[33]

MYSTICISM AND ANTI-INTELLECTUALISM

Though Sri Aurobindo, no less than Hegelians, emphatically asserts the place of reason in religion, he also clearly distinguishes between thought and spirit, which Hegel had identified. Every kind of phenomena requires a particular method to know it and different categories should be applied to explain different phenomena. Thus, like Pringle Pattison, Sri Aurobindo deplores the attempts of the naturalists to explain religious experience with the categories applied to other phenomena. Religion is rational and yet much more and a certain portion of this 'more' always defies intellectual analysis. This is the mystic element in all religions.

With mysticism, Sri Aurobindo has great sympathy. He strongly criticises the antimystic tendency characteristic of many modern psychologists. Downright denial is no better than dogmatic assertion. Nothing can be achieved without faith, through faith must be based on reason. The mystic method, must be subjective by the very nature of the end it seeks to achieve. It is not relevant to appeal to the widely different experiences of the mystics as a proof of their falsehood, since this manysidedness is the sign of the approach of the soul to a living reality and not to a rigid mental construction. Thus, Sri Aurobindo is a mystic, if by mysticism we mean a first hand spiritual realisation of God. But, taken in the sense of via negative, his is not a mysticism either in ends or in means. In mysticism, according to Miss Evelyn Underhill, "Not to know about but to be is the mark of the real practitioner".[34] Sri Aurobindo, on the other hand does not bifurcate between

33. Foundations of Indian Culture. p. 103.
34. Mysticism. p. 86.

knowing and being. Again, mysticism, according to the conclusion of "Enneads" is "a flight of the alone to the alone.[35]" According to Sri Aurobindo, on the other hand, God is realised in and through the world. The evolution in Nature aims at cosmic liberation and not only at the liberation of the individual, as the mystics wrongly suppose. Thus, Sri Aurobindo criticises only the extremist aspect of mysticism. He places it on more Philosophical grounds and also universalises it. According to Prof. K. A. Hakim, "He expounds mysticism which seeks not to mystify but to clarify.[36]" We may add that he not only clarifies but also universalises it.

EVOLUTION OF RELIGION

Every form of religion, according to Sri Aurobindo manifests a certain truth peculiar to its own stage. In its evolution, religion passed through several stages. Every thing in Nature, starts in inconscience, gradually advances with faltering steps through ignorance, retardations and instinctive oppositions and finally exhibits some partial intensities and the more vivid forms. It is at this stage, that there is a radical change, a decisive emergence which when heightened, widened and subtlised, reaches a truth which cannot be explained in terms of the earlier forms. Hence, the primitive beginning in totemism, nature worship and fetishism, etc. is no argument to disprove the truth of religion. As Sri Aurobindo points out, "this chequered history belongs to all human efforts and if it were to count against the truth and necessity of religion, would count also against the truth and necessity of every other line of human endeavour, against all man's action, his ideals, his thought, his art, his science.[37]" Sri Aurobindo does not deny the defects that have entered religion making it rigid, sterile and even positively harmful to mankind, but he clearly distinguishes between the false and true aspects of religion, between religion and what he calls religionism. Thus, as he says, "True religion is spiritual religion, that which seeks to live in the spirit, in what is

35. The Neo Platonists. p. 103.
36. Quoted by A B. Roy in "The World Grisis". p. 134.
37. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 696.

beyond the intellect, beyond the aesthetic and ethical and practical being of man, and to inform and govern these members of our being by the higher light and laws of the spirit. Religionism, on the contrary, entrenches itself in some narrow pietistic exaltation of the lower members or lays exclusive stress on intellectual dogmas, forms and ceremonies, on some fixed and rigid moral code, on some religo-political or religio-social system.[38]" Religionism must be substituted by true religion, whose work for man is to lead him towards the Divine, to formulate all that he has yet achieved in that direction and to give to each human being, a way of nearing the Truth, according to his capacities.

When all the various tendencies became more pronounced and even separate and free from one another, the first infrarational stage gradually passed into rational. As the intellectual element increased, everything was subordinated to creed, rituals and institutions. This tendency was led to its absurdity, in a complete denial of whatever is occult, supra-physical and religious. But, side by side with this there was another tendency which tried to liberate the secret spiritual element and to place it on a universal scale. This spiritual element was again developed in its extoteric and esoteric forms, the intensive method of religion. The amalgam of these two led to the formation of cults, creeds and dogmas. Thus evolved the great religions, which had the spiritual truth as their kernal that persisted only so long as it was occasionally renewed. These great religions again developed two forms, catholic and protestant, the one a tendency towards some conservation of the original plastic character of religion, its many-sidedness and appeal to the whole nature of human being, the other disruptive of this catholicity and insistent on a pure reliance on belief, worship and conduct simplified so as to make a quick and ready appeal to the common reason, heart and will. It was this later tendency which led to excessive rationalism, already referred, which taken to its extreme excludes all spiritual element from religion, leaving the dry intellectual alone, a poor substitute to living religions.

38. Human Cycle, p. 220.

In this long process of the evolution of religion, each religion has helped mankind. Paganism has increased the light of beauty, the largeness and height of man's life, and aimed at a many sided perfection. Christianity gave him some vision of divine love and charity. Buddhism has shown him a nobler way to be wiser, gentler and purer. Judaism and Islam have shown him how to be religiously faithful in action and zealously devoted to God. Hinduism has opened to him the largest and profoundest spiritual possibilities[39]. All the religions have saved a number of souls, but what is necded to spiritual mankind, is not cult and creed but a sustained and all-comprehending effort at spiritual self evolution. With Leuba and others Sri Aurobindo would admit that religion satisfies the fundamental needs of human life, but he points out to a wider purpose of Nature behind this narrow object. It seeks not only to heighten but also to widen, not only evolution but also integration, not only fulfilment of physical, vital and mental but also an uplift of all into spiritual, a psychisation, spiritualisation and unity with Sachchidānanda.

THE INTEGRAL VIEW

This leads Sri Aurobindo to an integral view of religion. As he points out, "A religion which is itself a congeries of religions and which at the same time provides each man with his own turn of inner experience, would be the most in consonance with this purpose of Nature: it would be a rich nursary of spiritual growth and flowering, a vast multiform school of soul's discipline, endeavour, self-realisation[40]." A harmony between various religions is necessary but not the abolition of variety since a diversity in oneness is the law of the manifestation of the Spirit in Nature.

Thus, Sri Aurobindo's approach to religion is integral. As a philosopher of religion, he finds out the limits of reason in this particular field of human experience and also judges its significance in the entire scheme of Nature. With Hegelians he traces evolution in religion and accepts the value of reason to purge religion of its infra-rational elements but unlike them he subordinates

39. Thoughts and Glimpses. p. 39.
40. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 726.

reason to supra-rational. With historians like Prof. Toynbee, he would admit the importance of religion in human history and with psycho-analysts, the play of infra-rational elements in religion. But, by tracing the supra-conscient influences in it, he clarifies a grave confusion. Like pragmatists, he admits the value of religion in life, but in consistency with his 'weltanschauung' he emphasises on the wider purpose of life in Nature.

Religion is a great intercessor between spirit and Nature. Its real business is to prepare man's mind and bodily existence for the advent of spiritual consciousness. It has to lead him to the point where the inner spiritual light begins to emerge fully. With Bradley, Sri Aurobindo points out to the discrepancy which religion leaves between the worshipper and the worshipped, but its culmination in yoga he does not mean its abolition but its fulfilment. Religion fails to achieve its purpose since it falls short of the complete union, psychicisation, trans-formation and integration. These, on the other hand, are the very essence of Yoga. Hence religion, to achieve its purposes must culminate in yoga. It is more so, since as Sri Aurobindo points out, "Spiritual experience is the final aim and achievement of religion, its sky and summit[41]." Philosophy of religion should be based on a total view of Reality, deciding the value of religion in the entire scheme of Nature. In the hierarchy of values, religion stands higher than morality but stops short of complete spirituality. Philosophy and religion, head and heart, thought and emotion are equally satisfied, integrated and transformed in spiritual experience. Religion is a necessary step between mind and spirit but yoga is indispensable to make its faith a living realisation[42].

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41. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 692.

42. "It is not sufficient to worship Krishna, Christ or Buddha without, if there is not the revealing and the formulation of the Buddha, the Christ or Krishna in ourselves."

—*Sri Aurobindo—The Synthesis of Yoga*. p. 74.

CHAPTER X

INTEGRAL YOGA AND HUMAN EVOLUTION

"If there is an evolution in material nature and if it is an evolution of being with consciousness and life as its two key-terms and powers, this fullness of being, fullness of consciousness, fullness of life must be the goal of development towards which we are tending and which will manifest at an early or later stage of our destiny."—Sri Aurobindo.

—Life Divine. Concluding Sentence.

THE SUMMUM BONUM

Evolution is the key to understand the purpose of individual and cosmic nature. This evolutionary purpose is determined by the very nature of creation. Spirit has involved in matter for the pure delight of manifestation and when that purpose is achieved, it must, by its very inherent teleology, evolve again to its original form. This is clearly exhibited by the process of evolution in Nature. Leibniz's monadology expresses this fact though it misses the universal. There is no warrant to stop at the waking monads, since if the force is the force of Being and one with it, and if evolution presupposes involution, the process should stop only when the force has realised Being. Otherwise, one is left in a perpetual oscillation. The consciousness force goes on evolving through matter, life and mind and the nisus must lead to Supermind. Not Philosophy but Yoga is the true summum bonum. As Sri Aurobindo says, "To be, not to know, is the object of manifestation; knowledge is only an instrumentation of the operative consciousness of being.[1]" To be and to be fully is the aim of man and Nature. To be fully means to be aware wholly and integrally aware of oneself. To be fully is to have the intrinsic and integral force of one's being. Lastly, to be fully is to have the full delight of being. Thus to be fully means to realise the hidden existence, conscious-

1. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 872.

ness and bliss. Again, to be fully is to be universally, since all being is one, and finally, to be universally, one must be also transcendentally.[2] Man will have to transcend the physical, vital and mental levels. Then alone, the spirit will control the lower nature. Individual and universal consciousness can find its fullness only by transcendence. Man's evolution is no longer an evolution in ignorance and through inconscience. It is an evolution from knowledge to fuller knowledge of Superconscience.

THE PURPOSE IN NATURE

This evolution has a twofold process, visible and invisible, physical and spiritual, the cosmic and individual. Sri Aurobindo believes in teleology in Nature. It is the urge of an intrinsic Truth-necessity, conscious in the indwelling Spirit. The game too has its object. Lilā is not without purpose. Ānanda does not exclude the working of the inherent truth. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "A manifestation of the greater powers of Existence, till the whole being itself is manifest in the material world in the terms of a higher, a spiritual creation may be considered as the teleology of evolution.[3]" Whatever Spengler and others might say, the evolution has definitely moved towards more and more complexity, plasticity, depth and width in all walks of existence and values. Even the falls are merely the downward curves of the spiral. The stress of spirituality in human race is a sign of the future destiny of man. Sri Aurobindo does not suggest the evolution en-block. After the human mind has reached a particular stage, there is a possibility of a gradual evolution to gnostic level. The entire being of man, physical, vital and mental, must be transformed. But the greatest change is the change of consciousness. In the psychic being of man, there is an eternal urge to grow. Evolution has become conscious in man. It is not through the change of body, as it is in earlier stages but through the growth of consciousness, that evolution will proceed in man. The evolution, however, is always spiritual. It is only in earlier stages that its spiritual nature is obscured due to inconscience. Man should consciously

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2. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 888-94.
3. Ibid. p. 650.

help Nature in his own spiritual and physical evolution and transformation. In Spirit, there is a tendency to rise from lower to higher, but the tendency to integrate and divinise the lower is equally fundamental. If man cannot rise to that level, he should give place to another species. But if he can, then there is no reason why he should not. In Nature, the essence is pre-existent to the apparent cause and emerges only at the right moment. Spirit is the final evolutionary emergence, because it is the original involutionary factor.

NATURE OF SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality is the natural light and inherent force of the Spirit. It is neither moral sense, religious fervour, nor idealism nor a compound of all these. It is different from cognition, conation or will. It is the authentic power of the Spirit and hence beyond the grasp of intellect. It is mystic, occult and esoteric. As a free-choice of our being it permeates the whole consciousness and illumines and windens it. It liberates and transforms the whole being. It is the culmination of all religion. It brings us in direct touch with the Divine. It is the essential and universal truth of existence, the one immortal self of all beings. Body, life and mind are its instruments of self-expression in matter. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "Spirituality is in its essence an awakening to the inner reality of our being, to a spirit, self and soul which is other than our mind, life and body, an inner aspiration to know, to feel, to be That, to enter into contact with the greater Reality beyond and pervading the universe, which inhabits our own being also, to be in communion with It and union with It, and a turning, a conversion, a transformation of our whole being as a result of the aspiration, the contact, the union, a growth or waking into a new nature.[4]" Thus, spirituality is a dynamic of a higher luminous and infinite consciousness. It is the breaking of the lid, the tearing of a covering or the opening of a door to Divine, which alone can fulfil the end sought by all science, ethics, religion and philosophy. It is truly realised in yoga.

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4. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 688.

DOUBLE EVOLUTION OF SPIRIT

The consciousness force seeks a double evolution, an evolution of the outer nature and also an evolution of the inner being. The heavy intertia and persistence of the body, the turbid passions of the life and the doubts and denials of the mind are so intolerable that often the spirit seeks to mortify the body, reject the life and silence the mind and to be separate from Nature to seek its own salvation. This leads to asceticism, illusionism and escapism. Thus, there is a dual tendency in the evolution of Spirit, its establishment, even sometimes at the cost of the rejection of other parts, and again its extension to other parts of nature. The establishment, however, is always prior to extension. It is to open this inner being that religion, occultism, Philosophy and spiritual realisation have been utilised by Nature. The first three are approaches while the last is the definite entry.

THE VALUE OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

Religion, and Philosophy have sometimes co-operated with each other but at other occasions worked on exclusively separate lines. Spiritual experience too has proceeded on independent lines, breaking relation from both these. But, these experiments on independent lines were necessary in the evolution of Nature, in order to find her true and whole way towards integral knowledge and consciousness. It is more so, since all these correspond to some fundamental needs of human being. Religion seeks to link man with the Divine and to sublimate the thought, life and flesh, so that they may follow the Spirit. But, this knowledge must be correlated with the knowledge of the facts of Science and this is the task of Philosophy. In the spiritual field, however, both religion and Philosophy must be subordinated to yoga since in yoga both get their fulfilment. Fulfilment in Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy, is well compatible with transcendence since transcendence here includes integration. Thus, yoga is a method as well as the end. Knowledge, will and feeling, all are instruments of the realisation of spirituality.

But, by this Sri Aurobindo does not mean to lessen the importance of Philosophy. He is no less a philosopher than a yogin,

only he does not exaggerate the value of intellect in the total being. Philosophy to him, is intellectual and not supramental knowledge. Hence it must be confined to its own place in the hierarchy of spiritual values.[5] In the gnostic stage, all religion, Philosophy, art and other-phenomena of mental level shall be fulfilled in a higher spontaneous supramental knowledge and will. Till then, so long as we are men, all these are equally necessary. As Sri Aurobindo says, "An intellectual approach to the highest knowledge, the mind's possession of it, is an indispensable aid to this movement of Nature in the human being.[6]" Intellect must be satisfied and enlightened. The support of reflective and critical reason is equally necessary. Intellect too should attain divine contact, if not directly then indirectly. Philosophy is concerned with the statement of general spiritual truth, the logic of the Infinite, the logic of things, their inter-relation and status in Spiritual evolution. Hence, Philosophy according to Sri Aurobindo, "must be a spiritual Philosophy[7]." But, however spiritual it may be, Philosophy is not a substitute for yoga. A spiritual mind can, at best, seek individual liberation or escape to other world, as it is in most of the systems of Philosophy, but it is not a substitute for spirituality. Spiritual evolution requires a higher dynamic than mind.

THE TRANSITION TO SUPERMIND

The cosmic purpose is not only a revelation of the Spirit but also a radical and integral transformation of Nature. The superman is not a greater man of a mystic. Superman transcends man. Supramental status, like Alexander's Deity, remains unknowable to mind though it can look towards it through the glimpses of some intermediary consciousness. It is only on the analogy of the transition from intellectual to spiritual level that one can guess

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5. "Philosophy, intellectual expression of the Truth may remain, but mainly as a means of expressing this greater discovery and as much of its contents as can at all be expressed in mental terms to those who still live in the mental intelligence."

—*Sri Aurobindo. The Riddle of This World.* p. 26.

6. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 713.
7. Ibid. p. 715.

this stage. Metaphysics is only of little help here, though the truth is sometimes grasped by mystic experience.

The transition from mind to supermind is a passage from Nature is supernature. All other lower planes are known through the working of the consciousness-force on inconscience and ignorance. The superior planes create their own foundation in our subliminal parts and from there influence the evolutionary process. Though involved in earth-nature, Overmind and Supermind have no such planes for they are superconscient to our ignorance. They can emerge only when the being and powers of the superconscience descend upon us, uplift us and formulate themselves in us. The ascent alone can achieve only a temporary and half-hearted result. For a real transformation, there must be a descent, an intervention from above and an absolute surrender from below.

Man's control over himself is the logical consequence of this evolutionary process. As he evolves in supernature, he becomes more and more free. Freedom from lower nature, however, implies submission to Supernature It is only when man becomes an instrument in the hands of Divine, that he escapes the mechanical determinism of Nature. Such a union does not annihilate individual but fulfils him. "It is the passage not into non-existence but to a greater existence.[8]" By realising himself as a centre and formation of the universal and transcendent spirit, man becomes more and more powerful and effective.

YOGA AND EVOLUTION

Yoga means union. It is "a methodised effort towards self-perfection by the expression of the potentialities latent in the being, and a union of individual with the universal and transcendent Existence, we see partially expressed in man and in the cosmos.[9]" Thus in a sense, all philosophy, religion, and all life is Yoga. The human and the cosmic evolution proceed on the same pattern. There is the same heightening and widening of the process, ascent to new levels and the integration of the lower ones. Yoga is, thus,

8. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 896.
9. The Synthesis of Yoga. Ist University Edition. p. 4.

a compressed form of the method of evolution in Nàture.[10] Integral yoga of Sri Aurobindo, starts with an idea of integral Divine. Thus, like integral psychology, integral yoga also is based on integral Philosophy. This, however, does not mean that yoga is subordinated to Philosophy. In a sense, Philosophy and yoga are correlative to each other. The more integral is yoga the more integral shall be the Philosophy based upon it and vice versa. As the yoginascends in his experience, so he tends to arrive at more and more perfection in his vision. It may be that he may not always feel the necessity of putting the experience in intellecttual terms, and thereby never become a philosopher in the intellectual sense. But then, the intellectual communication of spiritual experience being impossible, the yogin shall not be able to help the mental beings and hence fall short of the yogic aim of cosmic liberation, thereby making his yoga imperfect. **The need of philosophy can be optional only in the race of gnostic being, but unless the entire human race transcends the mental stage, philosophy is the highest knowledge for us.** Philosophy stands highest in man's knowledge and its value must not be deteriorated unless we transcend man. But, the intellect, on the other hand, does not create truths and it is here, that the supremacy of yoga and the importance of religion and science stands unchallenged. All true Philosophy is a "Philosophy of yoga.[11]" To understand Sri Aurobindo's view about the interrelation of all these, we must grasp his integral spirit in which everything receives its due and everything is utilised for the achievement of the supreme end, the Sachchidānanda, which is equally the end of all our Philosophy, science, religion and yoga.

We must again, distinguish between the epistemological and ontological significance of yoga, yoga as method and yoga as end; though ultimately Sri Aurobindo himself makes no distinction between opistemology and ontology since for him knowing is being. Yoga is a method of Philosophy but also its culmination. It is in the sense that yoga is a method to realise the integral Divine, that Sri Aurobindo calls it "nothing but practical psychology.[12]" It is

10. Ibid. p. 5.
11. Ibid. p. 34.
12. Ibid. p. 49.

because will must follow knowledge that yoga is a corollary of Philosophy and again, it is because the supramental knowledge cannot be attained without yoga, that Philosophy is subservient to yoga, just as intellect is subordinate to Spirit though also integrated in it.[13] All other forms of yoga are also psychological processes emphasising on the perfection of this or that aspect of man, but as integral psychology perfects all onesided approaches in psychology, so also all kinds of yoga are perfected in integral yoga. Thus, integral yoga, integral psychology and integral Philosophy are correlative to each other. Sri Aurobindo's is an integral approach, not so much a criticism but a fulfilment of all other approaches in Psychology, Philosophy or yoga and even in religion.

Our excuse for such a long digression from the original subject, is the necessity of the clarification of concepts, which, we feel, is the life-blood of all knowledge. Sri Aurobindo is himself very careful about this principle and has made subtle distinctions everywhere, only that he, like a true yogi-philosopher, has never lost right of the unity of knowledge. To resume our discussion about yoga and evolution; the evolution proceeds through matter, life and mind and they are highly important in it. Hence, no integral yoga can neglect the body, nervous energies or intellect. Secondly, as evolution aims at transfiguration and exaltation of the lower, so also the integral yoga leaves nothing, but exalts all and transfigures all. Again, evolution is not only individual but cosmic so also is the integral yoga. It aims, not at individual but cosmic liberation and supramentalisation, Thus, both evolution and yoga have common ends; but whereas evolution proceeds slowly and indirectly and seeks Divine in the symbols of Nature, Yoga works rapidly and directly and can reach the Transcendent beyond the universe. Hence generalisation of yoga would tremendously stimulate evolution in Nature.

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13. "The data of Philosophy are the supports from which it begins in the realisation of God through the principles of his being only it carries the intellegent understanding which is all Philosophy gives, into an intensity which carries it beyond thought and vision and beyond understanding into realisation and possession; what Philosophy leaves abstract and remote, it brings into a living nearness and spiritual concreteness."

—*Sri Aurobindo. Ibid.* p. 589.

SYNTHESIS OF YOGA

Hath-yoga acts on gross body, Rāj-yoga on subtle body. The triple path of works, love and knowledge aims at the liberation in truth, beatitude and infinity. These constitute a hierarchical order and each one of these separately, is a one-sided effort. Hence, to arrive at a perfect system, Sri Aurobindo attempts at a synthesis of all these. The principle, however, is neither a combination en-mass nor successive practice. It neglects the outward forms of these disciplines and seizes rather some central principle common to all, which includes and utilises their particular principles in the right place and proportion. Thus, integral yoga seeks to transform and integrate the entire being of man. In yogin, the centre is shifted from ego to real self which is the same as integral Absolute. In contrast to other systems, Sri Aurobindo's yoga has more scope for freedom and individual variation, though some broad outlines are fairly common to all. This catholicity of approach is a characteristic of Sri Aurobindo, of all his Philosophy, religion, psychology and yoga. Integral yoga leads to integral realisation and finally, an integral liberation, a synthesis of all methods, conceptions of Reality and also that of liberation. An integral purity leads to integral beatitude and prepares for integral perfection of humanity. This, however, is not eclecticism or a mere putting together of various views. It is the outcome of dynamic and integral realisation of Spirit, the Sachchidānanda who is equally the synthesis and culmination of all knowledge.

CONSECRATION AND CONCENTRATION

Yoga presupposes an internal need, an inner call for the Divine. This may be aroused by any means, Philosophy, religion, art or anything else. The wider the moving idea-force the better for the seeker. The main thing is the decision of the mind and the will, resulting in complete and effective self-consecration to God and God alone. Surrender of the entire being soul, mind, heart, sense, will, life, body, is the first condition of yoga. The task is very difficult but escapism has no place in integral yoga. It requires an all receiving concentration which leads to a realisation of Divine. This, and not philosophy, is the knowledge of yoga. Philosophy

is merely its systematic study through mental concepts. As Sri Aurobindo says, "A concentration which culminates in a living realisation and the constant sense of the presence of the One in ourselves and in all of which we are aware, is what we mean in yoga by knowledge and the effort after knowledge[14]." Philosophy is a half way house to supramental knowledge[15].

SYNTHESIS OF KNOWLEDGE, LOVE AND ACTION

Sri Aurobindo gives equal importance to thought, heart and will. Integral yoga is a synthesis of the yoga of knowledge, yoga of devotion and the yoga of works. The heart can directly realise the truth. Life can be spiritualised through the sacrifice of knowledge, love and works with the psychic being as the leader and priest of the sacrifice. Delight is the nature of consciousness and love is the acme of delight. Hence, love is the crown of all being. It leads to perfect union and greatest spiritual fulfilment. The more complete the knowledge the richer the love. Such a love, however, is not contrary to works. "Love is the crown of works and the flowering of knowledge[16]." It is fully satisfied only in Divine, since it is here, that it is absolute, eternal and unalloyed. It is a yearning for absolute unity, beauty, delight, eternity and possession. Again, not only wisdom and love, but power is also an aspect of Divine and put here for divine use. The perfection in yoga includes perfection of the fundamental soul powers, the perfect surrender of our instruments and action to the Divine shakti, together with soul-faith in Divine. All the activities of the mind, intelligence, memory, reason and imagination, etc., as well as the senses are transformed in supramental stage. They develop new strength peculiar to this level.

TRIPLE TRANSFORMATION

But this can be done only by bridging the gulf between mind

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14. The Synthesis of Yoga. Ist University Edition. p. 92.

15. "Philosophy is of little help in getting true knowledge, which must come from experience and actual realisation. It serves as a mental exercise—it makes the mind supple and clear; it gives ideas to the mind that there is something higher than itself to which it should aspire; thus it serves as a sort of springing board."—*Sri Aurobindo*.

—*Quoted in Mother India. August 1952.* p. 5.

16. The Synthesis of Yoga. Ist. University Edition. p. 628.

and supermind which requires a triple transformation, psychic, spiritual and supramental. The psychic change implies the conversion of our entire present nature into a soul instrumentation. Integration is not complete at vital and mental levels. For a complete and radical change the spiritual experience must make the lower parts to recognise it as their own law. This illumination is constantly opposed by the lower parts as well as the hostile forces. This can be overcome by an opening up of the inner being, the inner life-consciousness and life-mind, the subtle-physical consciousness and its subtle-physical mentality. But to bring a decisive and permanent change, the inner psychic being should be opened. It is then, that the higher spiritual mind and overmind uplift the central being towards their own level and commence the last integration of nature. Spiritual change is the descent of a higher light, knowledge, power, forces, bliss, purity into the whole being. Lastly, the supramental change requires ascent into supermind and the transforming descent of the supramental consciousness into our entire being and nature. The soul may come in direct contact of Reality through mind and heart but an integral transformation requires the transmutation of mental, vital and physical. Again, to arrive at a widest-totality and profound completeness, the consciousness must shift its centre from surface to inner being. All other steps are merely aids, the central way is the finding of the self within us. First of all, this results in the harmonisation and spiritual order of the whole being. Next, there is an inflow of all kinds of spiritual experiences. But, this again is not complete till the in-ward opening is collaborated by an opening out-ward. This can be done by the ascent of the psychic being to supramental levels. But again, the descent of the higher consciousness is equally necessary since it alone can bring a permanent ascent. It gradually transforms the entire being and establishes it on a higher plane. This is not done by a sudden leap but by a gradual process, since there are numerous intervening difficulties. Thus, the psychic change has to call in spiritual change to complete it. So also the spiritual change is not completed without the supramental transformation. This finishes the passage of the soul through the ignorance and bases its consciousness, life, power and form of

manifestation on a complete and effective self-knowledge.

All this requires the combined working of four great instruments, viz. śāstra, utsāha, gurú and kāla. The supreme śāstra of the integral yoga is the eternal veda, secret in the heart of every thinking and living being. Another kind of śāstra is about methods, which differs with individual variations. The supreme guide and teacher is the inner guide secret within us. Again, broadly speaking, there are three stages in the process of yoga, the contact with the Divine, the transformation of the whole conscious being and, finally, the utilisation of our transformed humanity as a divine centre in the world.

In this ascent there are various grades, which are not only faculties but levels of being and energy-substance of Spirit. As we descend, the consciousness becomes more and more thin and rarefied in light. As we ascend, there is a finer but stronger and truer spiritual substance. Hence, with the descent of these higher grades, their light, consciousness and bliss transforms the physical, vital and mental. But for the obstraction of inconscience, this process is natural, since all the levels are fundamentally the same consciousness-force, only in different forms. Supramental consciousness can be established in an individual only when he becomes a centre of its working in the universe. And when it is firmly established here, it shall work on earth-existence which would result in a hierarchy of states of consciousness rising from mind to supermind.

THE GNOSTIC BEING

Now, what would be the nature of this future transformation of man which Sri Aurobindo calls the stage of gnostic being? The future destiny of man has rarely been painted in such gay colours and with such a happy combination of realism and optimism. Sri Aurobindo is a prophet of a new age, not the age of a Nietschein, superman, but of the advent of the divine man. The entire being, thinking, living and action of the gnostic being shall be governed by universal spirit. He would feel divine everywhere and also in all parts of his own being. Everywhere he sees his own self, in beings as well as in Nature. He would be universal but free in the universe, individual but not limited by a separative individuality.

He shall be a perfect individual fulfilling individuality, commonality and essentiality in their harmony. He will have complete self-knowledge and complete self-mastery. In the lower grades of gnostic beings, these shall be restricted and limited. But the supramental being would act as a cosmic individual. His awareness, will and action shall be in union with the Absolute. Its sense would be the delight of manifestation. His cosmic sympathy would be a part of his being. There will be no conflict of his good with the good of others. His feelings and actions shall be spontaneously universal. His entire purpose shall be the joy of being. All will be seen in the whole. His knowledge shall be the Real-idea of the supermind. This evolution would transform the entire world-consciousness and world-action. The gnostic being will have a complete knowledge and hold of all existence. All will be the finding "of the self by the self in the self.[17]" The present indirect knowledge shall be replaced by intuitive knowledge. The gnostic being shall live for the Divine and be an instrument of the manifestation of His super Nature. In him, the will of the spirit shall directly control the body since the subconscient or inconscient is transformed into conscient or supra-conscient. The eternal Ānanda shall be revealed in the universal phenomena. It shall be felt in the entire being as well as Nature.

ETHICS TRANSCENDED

Now, what shall be the place of personality and thereby that of morality in gnostic stage? Ethics presupposes individuality and personality. In supramental consciousness, the ego is replaeed by impersonal and universal being and yet it has a form and personality which is its distinctive mark. The gnostic person is an infinite apd universal being revealing itself through the particular forms of an individual and temporal manifestation. He shall be completely self-determined. All his actions shall spontaneously proceed from knowledge. There shall be no ignorance error, falsehood or evil. Virtue and vice is determined with reference to the nature of ultimate end and hence in a stage where the ultimate end is truly realised, there shall be no place for

17. Life Divine, Vol. II. p. 840.

ethics. As Kant and Bradley rightly point out, the moral man remains in a perpetual conflict and if the conflict is abolished, ethics becomes superfluous. The axilogical ought is higher than moral ought and the latter is subordinated to the former. All values are subordinated to spiritual values and fulfilled in it.

In the supramental stage, there shall be a perfect accord within man as well as between individuals. The knowledge and action here, shall have the width and plasticity of infinite freedom. The individual nature would be a current of supernature. The gnostic being shall have an inherent Truth-knowledge, Truth-sight, Truth-feeling, and Truth-will, Truth-sense and Truth-dynamics of action. There shall be a perfect control of physical, vital and mental being. Again, for some time at least, the gnostic principle shall exist side by side with the lower degrees of consciousness and life but finally it will dominate the whole. Its manifestation will make the entire lower scheme, an evolution without strife. The supramental being shall work by a knowledge through identity, while other types of gnostic beings shall have different and lower types of knowledge. This change would be complete, when the supramental evolution becomes complete and rises into the greater fullness of a supreme manifestation of Sachchidānanda.

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

Gnostic being lives for Divine. It is on the foundation of this unity of man in Divine, that Sri Aurobindo has developed his social and political philosophy. This aim is beyond nationalism and even beyond internationalism and all sorts of mental relations. It is based on the fundamental essence of all existence. Man is not the end in himself nor is he the end of Nature. Both Nature as well as Man aim at Divine. The true desideratum is the transformation of the entire human race. This gnostic society shall be based on the same principles as we have seen in case of the gnostic individuals. As Sri Aurobindo points out, "A collective life of this kind must obviously constitute itself on the same principle as the life of the gnostic individual[18]." This, however, does

18. Life Divine, Vol. II, Second Edition, p. 898.

not mean the abolition of national peculiarities. There shall be a considerable free diversity between gnostic beings as well as between their different communities. To understand Sri Aurobindo's speculations about the future destiny of man, we must look it in the background of his integral Philosophy. The Absolute is not a dead unity but unity rich with diversity. The gnostic society shall be based on the principles of unity, mutuality and harmony. "Unity is the gnostic consciousness, mutuality the natural result of its direct awareness of oneness in diversity, harmony the inevitable power of the working of its force[19]." All discords of the mental level shall be reconciled in supramental status.

Modern social and political ideals move in the individualistic and collectivistic groves. On the one side are the Marxists and Fascists advocating the supremacy of state over individual. On the other side are the democrats and anarchists who emphasise on the freedom of individual. In between these, there are many other forms of ideologies bending on this or that side, advocating monarchy, aristocracy, oligarchy or any other form of state and society. The problems facing us in social and political fields have been unsuccessfully approached from various standpoints. Sri Aurobindo advances a spiritual solution, which is quite consistent with experience and coherent with reason. As in the case of the individual so in the case of society, unity and harmony can be attained only through the inner principle which is also universal and transcendent. As Sri Aurobindo says, "Our aim must be to be perfect as God in His being and bliss is perfect, pure as He is pure; blissful as He is blissful, and, when we are ourselves siddhas in Purna-Yoga to bring all mankind to the same divine perfection[20]." While Karl Marx concentrates on the external form of evolution, Sri Aurobindo goes deeper and finds out its inherent spiritual nature. Matter is spirit in disguise. Time is the time of Timeless. The processes of Nature and history can be truly understood only in the light of their inherent divine teleology. The wider and more comprehensive theory is the more true. As

19. Life Divine. Vol. II. Second Edition. p. 901.
20. The Advent Vol. XI. No. 2. p. 16.

in Metaphysics, so in the field of social or political philosophy, Sri Aurobindo would not reject any theory downright, but emphasise on its merits within specified limitations. It is only when these limits are crossed that the theories cease to be fruitful and some times even positively misleading. What is required is not a new theory but a whole view, which may find a reasonable place for all issues and at the same time see these problems in the wider perspective of the ultimate nature of Reality. The truth of any theory depends on its coherence in the entire scheme of the world since all problems are interrelated. Dialectical materialism and Hegelian Absolutism are two faces of the same truth. The ideal theory must aim at the perfection of the entire man and the entire human race. This, however, is not possible unless it is also the purpose of Divine in Nature. Pessimism leads to a Philosophy of doom, which is neither justified by reason nor corroborated by experience. Man's destiny lies in the fulfilment of divine purpose and the purpose of Divine is the fulfilment of man and Nature in Him.

Thus, in Sri Aurobindo's theory, the individual should owe allegiance neither to state nor to society but to Divine. It is the clash of different loyalties which is responsible for most of the problems of human relations. The Divine, however, is not a negation of these relations but an affirmation of all of them, since all is He. But, this is the ideal of the highest stage. So long as man is undeveloped, he must follow the rules of society. Sri Aurobindo, in his truly integral spirit, is against all kinds of extreme individulism, anarchism as well as totalitarianism. As the man develops, he becomes more and more free, but the individual freedom is not contrary to universal interests. As the individual becomes more perfect, so the society. Man has gradually to perfect his physical, vital and mental being, transcending each towards a higher value, till he arrives at the true self, and governs and perfects all by it. Sri Aurobindo's is a synthesis of East and West, ancient and modern, since 'Spirit' which is the master word of his Philosophy, integrates all in a higher synthesis. He advocates the ancient Indian ideal of liberation but in the spirit of the modern West, places it on a democratic level.

Our present materialistic civilization is threatening to return to the barbaric stage. The watchful statesmen and political philosophers look towards religion and morality for the solution of the world-crisis. But until there is a fundamental change in the mental consciousness, all such efforts are mere patch-works. Sri Aurobindo has developed this theme in several of his important works, mainly in 'Human Cycle' and 'The Ideal of Human Unity.' He not only warns us of the danger but presents a comprehensive solution of the malady. Mechanisation or rationalisation may lead to more material efficiency but it is likely to sap the spiritual resources of mankind and if this spiritual nisus is abandoned, man must either relapse to barbaric stage or disappear as an evolutionary failure. Science and ethics, philosophy and religion have failed to present a final solution. Here, Sri Aurobindo points us to yoga. Spirituality alone can solve our individual and social problems. Integral yoga is the only remedy and the sole issue. To achieve a permanent evolutionary success, man must become Divine. An integral surrender to divine, a perfect consecration and concentration is the only need. The rest shall be done by the Divine Himself. This is the buoyant optimism, which supported by a comprehensive reason and integral experience guides the entire Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo.

CHAPTER XI
CONCLUSION

"Three things will remain from the labour of the secularist centuries; truth of the physical world and its importance, the scientific method of knowledge which is to induce nature and being to reveal their own way of being and proceeding, not hastening to put upon them our own impositions of idea and imagination, Adhyaropa,—and last, though very far from least, the truth and importance of earth life and the human endeavour, its evolutionary meaning. They will remain, but will turn to another sense and disclose greater issues. Surer of our hope and our labour, we shall see them all transformed into light of a vaster and more intimate world-knowledge and self-knowledge."—Sri Aurobindo.

Evolution. Concluding Paragraph.

Thus the problems of metaphysics and religion have been approached from various perspectives. Yet, nowhere man could reach a reconciliation and satisfactory conclusion. Monism, Pluralism and Dualism, Materialism, Vitalism and Mentalism, all have given impetus to reaction in favour of their opposites. History of Philosophy is a record of these clamouring schools claiming for superiority. Some of the basic fallacies underlying all these as we have seen in the preceding chapters, are: the extension of reason beyond its limits, the confusion of suprarational with infra-rational, the substitution of focus with the fringe, whole with the part and a dogmatic denial of all reality to whatever fall outside their limited ken. Thus, one finds closed systems of Philosophy, presenting specialised diagnosis and claiming their solutions to be panaceas. These have often led to an absolute negation of metaphysics, as a useless appendage to Science. Philosophy has come to a blind alley. It is high-time that it should review the situation and change the methods, but this time it should not be a yet another method along with the others, but one which integrates all of them.

THE NEED OF THE TIME

The eternal truth of Philosophy should be presented in new forms according to the needs of the time. If Philosophy has not to remain confined to some idle arm-chair dilettanti but serve for the regeneration of human race, it should adopt to the needs of our age. A 'weltanshauung' which negates either limb of the trinity of world, God and individual, falls short of the integral truth. Pessimism and escapism have their reasons but they do not represent the sole truth. The explanation of life as misery does not explain that desperate clinging to life which we observe everywhere. In every branch of knowledge, there have been more than enough isms and feuds. As R. E. Dewey rightly points out, "If Philosophy is to survive, renewed interest in the synthetic generalising function is now an indispensable condition[1]." The need of synthesis is more than a truism to be any more emphasised. This synthesis, however, should not be a mere patch-work or an electicism. A dynamic approach welding all other approaches in an integral whole, would alone serve the purpose. Again, no uptodate Philosophy can turn its back to the conclusions of science, though values are as much important as facts. The hypothesis of evolution as proved by science has been adopted by western Philosophers. What is, however, needed is its synthesis with eastern spiritual vision. If evolution has to explain the world enigma and not some isolated facts of experience, it must be a spiritual evolution. Philosophy, today, needs a common platform for the meeting of the extremes. As in other branches of knowledge and activities, so in Philosophy, a happy synthesis of East and West should be developed. This should be done with special reference to the problems of self, evolution and the notion of experience. The western Philosophers should widen their arena of experience to include all types specially, occult, religious and spiritual. The East should adopt the concept of evolution to arrive at a truly dynamic Reality. The psychological findings of the West should be synthesised with the spiritual discoveries of the East, to arrive at a true conception of Self.

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1. The Journal of Philosophy Vol. LIII. No. 5. March 1956. p. 191.

SRI AUROBINDO'S CONTRIBUTION

A REVIVAL OF UPANISHADIC VISION

Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy is a return to Upanishads. Indian Philosophy, in Sri Aurobindo, comes to itself after such a long chequered history. The course, however, has not been useless. Nature progresses through extremes, so does thought Dvaita, Advaita and Viśistādvaita all other approaches, one sided though they may be, bring to light a particular aspect of Reality. Their only mistake is the deification of part as whole. Sri Aurobindo accepts all of them but also points out their limitis. His is a Philosophy of absolute affirmation.

THE INTEGRAL VIEW

This is the integral approach which rejects none but takes all in its higher synthesis. In Philosophy, religion, psychology, ethics as well as education and all other branches of human knowledge, Sri Aurobindo emphasises the whole man, the man together with Nature and the Spirit which equally manifests in man, world and God. The generating insight behind Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy is the integral experience of Sachchidānanda. Whatever is, is real, since nothing is outside the Absolute. Sachchidānanda does not falsify its appearances but guarantees their reality. Self is true in Absolute. Man is as much real as God. Human love is not ignorance but a stepping stone to Divine love. All this, however, is not a reasoned conviction based on comparative study or thinking. Integral Philosophy is based on integral yoga, an integral realisation of Sachchidānanda.

THE INTEGRAL METHOD

The method of Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy is integral. The Philosopher has not only to know but to be. To be is to know. Thus, Philosophy is close to life. It is a springing board for spiritual realisation. But, this does not denote its inferiority Science, religion, metaphysics and ethics, all have their swadharma, all are equally indispensable steps to Divine. Spiritual intuition finds place for all types of intuitions. But this should not lead us to minimise the necessity of clarification of concept. It is this,

which is responsible for so many conflicting views in Philosophy. This again, has led philosophers to use alien methods in the field of Philosophy. Philosophy, as the name suggests, is a love of wisdom. The more comprehensive is the more wise. Hence, Philosophy should include all types of experiences. This, however, requires an integral realisation, and an integral method to achieve it.

INTEGRAL YOGA

Such is the integral yoga As Philosophy moved away from life, it was led to its *reductio ad absurdum* in logical analysis, giving birth to anti-metaphysics. Spiritual experience is the life-breath of all true Philosophy and also its culmination. Indian philosophers have always been in search of some method to realise the Ultimate. These, however, have been always one-sided. Integral yoga is an approach through whole being. It not only implies ascent but also makes for the descent of Divine on Earth. Its aim is not only individual but cosmic salvation, not only release but psychicisation, integration and supramentalisation. It synthesises all other types of yoga and advances upon them to arrive at a complete technique to realize Reality in its integrity.

INTEGRAL PSYCHOLOGY

Sri Aurobindo lays the foundation of a new psychology, which seeks to unravel many hidden powers and faculties of man. It also serves as a basis for the meeting of the extremes in Psychology. Methods should change to suit the phenomenon under enquiry. There are no panaceas in psychology or philosophy. As in Philosophy so in Psychology, Sri Aurobindo does not reject other theories. He only points out their limits and seeks to synthesise them to arrive at a truly integral view. His is a scientific method of constant comparison, observation and new experiments.

SYSTEMATISATION IS UNPHILOSOPHICAL

Sri Aurobindo is neither a sceptic nor a dogmatist. Human knowledge can never claim to arrive at any sort of finality. Knowledge is always growing to wider and more comprehensive truth. Hence systematisation in Philosophy is unphilosophical. Sri Aurobindo believes in an evergrowing knowledge, always

prepared to improve, modify and even change. His is a catholic approach. In religion as well as Philosophy, Sri Aurobindo finds reason for every view.

INTEGRAL RELIGION

In consistency with his theory of spiritual evolution, Sri Aurobindo expounds an integral religion. Such a religion finds place for every kind of religion in the hierarchy of spiritual development. Each religion has helped in humanity's upward march. Religion satisfies a fundamental need and is indispensable. But its present form needs reformation. The more spiritual a religion the better it is, for spirituality is its goal. Mysticism is the acme of all religion but it needs to be universalised and clarified. Yet, to Sri Aurobindo, religion is a mere transitary stage. There is no religion of supermen. Religion is a halfway house from mind to Spirit. But to make man enter spirituality, it must give place to yoga. Not religion but yoga is the way to Divine. Yoga, however, does not annihilate religion, Philosophy or Science, but finds place for all of them and utilises them as instruments for God-realisation.

NATURE OF SPIRITUALITY

Perhaps the greatest contribution of Sri Aurobindo is the revelation of the true nature of spirituality. Upanishads and Gita also had an integral view of Spirit, but it was Sri Aurobindo, who for the first time discovered subtle distinctions in the realm of Spirit and divined an integral yoga for its achievement. As he points out, Brahman consciousness is only a lower grade in the march to Sachchidānanda. Thus, Absolute is Para Brahman. Even Supermind is above Brahman. Sri Aurobindo claims to have reached Brahman consciousness much earlier than Supramental. There are many luminous regions from mind to Supermind. But, unlike Hegel and others, Sri Aurobindo never claims to arrive at an absolute Philosophy or an experience of the Absolute as such. Sri Aurobindo, for the first time, emphasises the role of psychicisation, and integration in Spirit. The concept of Spirit is not new in Philosophy. One finds it in Hegel, Croce, Śaṁkara, Bradley and many others in east and west, but nowhere we find a truly integ-

ral view. Spirit, according to Sri Aurobindo, integrates and transforms physical, vital as well as mental. Hence, Spiritual Philosophy finds place for all kinds of experiences.

LOGIC OF THE INFINITE

Spiritual experiences, cannot be justified by finite logic. Spirit is known through identity of consciousness and not through mind. Hence, its logic should be a logic of consciousness, which is one and infinite, though in it unity does not annihilate multiplicity. Sri Aurobindo's logic of Infinite justifies his spiritual Philosophy. This logic itself is not new, as one finds its traces in upanishads and also elsewhere, but it is Sri Aurobindo who has for the first time so boldly distinguished between infra-rational and supra-rational and established the foundation of a true logic of Philosophy. Logic must adapt to experience and not *vice versa.* Not reason but a higher intuition and experience, is the judge of any intuition and experience. In the field of Infinite, reason has the pious duty to describe as faithfully as possible, the experiences of consciousness. This new logic, however, does not reject other logics, but finds out their limitations. Sri Aurobindo seeks to distinguish between different types of experiences and the different types of logic required to justify them. Thus, integral Philosophy is rational and self consistent.

SYNTHESIS OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

In the tradition of upanishads, Sri Aurobindo admits the claims of both Philosophy and religion for the regeneration of man. Both are equally indispensable on mental level though as man transcends man himself they would give place to supramental knowledge and supramental delight. Hence the conception of ultimate Reality must satisfy both Philosophy and Religion. It must be both theoretically consistent and practically realisable. A Philosophy which subordinates God to Absolute or assigns it only a phenomenal reality, has no place for religion and hence falls short of the complete truth. Again, since neither infra-mental nor mental, nor both together is the whole man, both should be integrated in Spirit. Hence, Sri Aurobindo subordinates Philosophy and religion to yoga. One should, however, note that here subordination does

not mean negation or even derogation. New field of enquiry requires new methods. Philosophy, religion and even science and ethics are supreme in their own fields. But, for the realisation of Spirit, yoga is indispensable.

NOT A DENIAL OF ETHICS

Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy is not a denial of Ethics, since individual is real in the Absolute. A Philosophy which finds no place for the individuality of the self in the Ultimate, negates ethics as well as religion. Inspite of all arguments in defence, it is difficult to understand how ethics and religion can be maintained on Śaṁkara's position that individuality is due to ignorance. Sri Aurobindo aims at an a-moral status and yet maintains the need of ethics on mental level.

SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION

The key to understand Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy is the spiritual evolution. All ideas are centred around this central theme. Yoga is a method for its realisation. Philosophy, religion, science and ethics are stepping stones to this supreme purpose of man and Nature and the inherent Divine in both. Sri Aurobindo has traced the phenomenon of evolution in Philosophy, history, culture, science, religion politics, etc., and everywhere advanced speculations consistent with the general scheme of the evolutionary purpose.

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

Sri Aurobindo finds a harmonious synthesis of the relation of individual and society in Divine. Individual salvation presupposes universal salvation. A realisation in isolation of the social self, is a one sided vision. Thus, Sri Aurobindo revives the ancient ideal of Bodhisattva. The basis of altruism is not philosophy but the realisation of the Reality underlying all. Divine is not a dead unity but a rich multiplicity. Hence, men and societies may develop their individuality and yet maintain the common bonds. Such a catholic, integral and clarified vision can alone lay down the foundation of a world society.

THE MESSAGE OF GNOSTIC STAGE

In consistency with his general scheme of evolution, Sri Aurobindo proclaims the advent of gnostic stage. Like all serious thinkers he takes cognisance of the present crisis in human civilization and warns us of the danger. The remedy which he suggests is the transition of man to superman and his entire life was a dedication to this cause. However pessimistic the present state may be, Sri Aurobindo's optimism is not without reason. The whole thing is consistent with the general scheme. Sri Aurobindo himself never insists on the exactness of the details but only on the bare outline. Man has experimented with so many solutions. Theoretically speaking, Sri Aurobindos presents a more consistent solution and there is every reason to hope that practically also it would prove to be better, if it is given a chance to present its credentials.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF OUR AGE

Thus, Sri Aurobindo's is the Philosophy of our age. It represents all the crying need of the time. It is an integral synthesis of old and new, east and west, realism and idealism, pragmatism and spiritualism. The static, acosmic and idealistic theories have led to escapism, pessimism and sociopolitical disintegration. A 'weltanshauung', which finds a place for all the aspects of human life and welds all knowledge in an integral whole, can alone serve humanity. Sri Aurobindo shows the way in this direction. It is left for the future Philosophers to follow the outlines and develop a Philosophy worthy of its name, truly performing its part in the regeneration of the human race.

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